

Hafa Adai!

Probable cause found to try 18-year-old suspect in rape case. **PAGE 2**
San Nicolas supports Tinian RDHs. **PAGE 3**

75¢

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'LESS THAN 200 VISITORS A MONTH RIGHT NOW'

MVA sees quick tourism rebound

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Right now, the CNMI is getting less than 200 visitors a month, but the Marianas Visitors Authority is confident the tourism industry will recover quickly in the coming months.



In her presentation during last week's House Committee on Ways and Means hearing on the MVA's budget, managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo outlined where the agency and the CNMI's tourism industry are right now but said See MVA on Page 4



By BEA CABRERA
beacabrera@saipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

A group of Japanese volunteers led by Saipan businessmen Morito Asai and Kentaro Suzuki and returning tourist Kenichi Nakajima have added to the rows

sory remains in effect until 10am today, Wednesday. A small craft advisory also remains in effect until 10am.

According to the National Weather Service in Guam, Tropical Depression 06W has been upgraded to a tropical storm as it continues to move away from the Marianas. Also, a high surf advisory

See TD06W on Page 4

The Japanese volunteers that helped erect a new monument at Suicide Cliff are led by Kentaro Suzuki and Morito Asai (both on the right side of photo).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

of memorials at Suicide Cliff with the installation last week of a new Japanese memorial that commemorates the sacrifices of all men and women who perished during the Pacific War of World War II.

See MONUMENT on Page 4

One new dengue case in Guam

The Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services has received a laboratory confirmed cases of dengue fe-

ver on June 21, 2021.

The last two local sporadic cases of dengue fever occurred more than 15 months ago and

were more than a month apart in January and February 2020. There was a total of 22 cases in all of 2019 (13 locally ac-

quired and nine imported cases), including cases from the September 2019 outbreak.

See DENGUE on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

The economy is growing at a healthy clip and that has also accelerated the inflation rate.

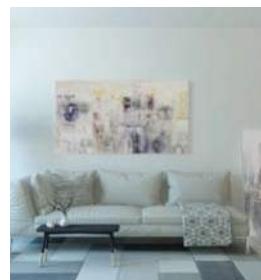
PAGE 11



NATION

Deaths among patients in nursing homes soared by 32% last year says a government watchdog.

PAGE 12



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Ten home renovations that you have to make before you retire to increase your home's value.

PAGE 14



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AT A GLANCE

As of 7:09pm, June 22, 2021

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Eligible Population **61.6%**
Fully Vaccinated: **61.6%**

Pfizer/BioNTech		
Initiated:	24,280	
Fully Vaccinated:	22,008	
Moderna		
Initiated:	4,047	
Fully Vaccinated:	3,699	
Janssen		
Fully vaccinated:	386	

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	8,284	20	8,304
Recovered	8,094	2	8,096
Active	49	20	69
Deaths	139	0	139
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			175,679

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	183	0	183
Traced via Travel Screening	147	0	147
Traced via Community Screening	36	0	36
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			91

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

Local

Probable cause found to try 18-year-old suspect in rape case

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has found probable cause to try an 18-year-old man accused of raping a 13-year-old in the Jesus is Lord Church restroom.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo found probable cause to try 18-year-old John Timothy Vil-lasis Vergara for sexual abuse of a minor in the first degree

and sexual assault in the first degree.

Probable cause is a required in order to prosecute a person in criminal court and it is determined by belief that a crime was committed based on facts that can be argued in court.

During his preliminary hearing last Monday, Vergara appeared out of Department of Corrections custody. He appeared with his third-party custodian: his mother and family.

Assistant attorney General James Houston, who represented the government during the preliminary hearing, called Department of Public Safety detective Shannon Dela Cruz to the stand where she testified about interviewing the victim's mother, the minor witness who allegedly saw Vergara exit the church restroom, and a handful of family friends who reported the incident and found that

all their testimonies were consistent with one another.

Vergara's attorney, Office of the Public Defender's JP Nogues, cross-examined Dela Cruz and uncovered that, as of Monday, there was no physical evidence in the case. The underwear and shorts that Vergara allegedly removed from the victim had been washed and were not available for testing, and she could not recall whether Ver-

gara's DNA samples were found following the victim's physical examination.

In addition, the only witness to the alleged assault could not confirm whether she saw the victim leave the restroom after Vergara because she allegedly retreated back to the church to wait for the victim soon after seeing Vergara exit.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Vergara allegedly raped the victim on two occasions: at a birthday party in Micro Beach back in August 2020, and in the restroom of the Jesus is Lord Church last June 2 during a church anniversary practice.

During an interview with the victim's mother on June 8, she told DPS investigators that Vergara raped her daughter for the second time in the church's

restroom during a church anniversary practice.

The following day, June 9, a DPS investigator attended a forensic interview with the victim at the Division of Youth Services where she alleged that the second incident happened at around 7pm on June 2.

The first incident that happened on August 2020 was reported at the Commonwealth Health Center on Jan. 25. During an interview with Dr. Heather Taylor, the victim wrote on a paper that when they were celebrating her brother's birthday at Micro Beach when she went into the ocean with her mother's friend's son, Vergara, and the incident happened. That prompted the doctor to report the incident to DPS.

Podcast turns spotlight on 500 Sails founders

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Emma and Pete Perez, who are co-founders of 500 Sails, a nonprofit organization that is seeking to revive the maritime traditions of the CNMI, were welcomed as guests on the Fanachu Podcast last week, giving them a chance to promote the group and its plans.

The Perez, who are based on Saipan, and podcast host Michael Bevacqua, who hosts the program in Guam, spent an hour discussing 500 Sails' purpose, its past and future projects, the history of the CNMI's maritime traditions, cultural decolonization in the CNMI, and many other topics in between.

The Fanachu Podcast describes itself on its Patreon page as "a Guahan-based indigenous media project challenging colonialism by bringing critical narratives to the masses through podcasts, videos and other creative content."

In emails to *Saipan Tribune* on Monday, Emma and Pete Perez said they were more than thankful for the opportunity to open up further discourse on the CNMI's maritime traditions and culture in general. Also, according to Emma Perez, the podcast happened the same time Saipan experienced an islandwide power outage. In response, the two took chairs outside, set them next to two canoes, and did their podcast guest appearance by the beach.

"It was really interesting getting ready for the podcast and having the power go out islandwide. ... We had a power bank, two phones, a couple of water bottles, some shade, and a nice breeze. I especially liked the opportunity to interact with people in the [U.S.] mainland who are interested in what is happening in the CNMI as more and more canoes hit the water. Our hope is for the CNMI to be known for the unique place that it is, home to two maritime cultures," said Emma Perez.

Pete Perez commended the Fanachu Podcast for its efforts in getting its listeners engaged with the CNMI's maritime traditions and for bringing those in and outside of the CNMI together. "The Fanachu series of podcasts on the Chamorro

culture resurgence gave everyone interested in the movement the chance to hear what is going on in Guahan [Guam], the CNMI and in the diaspora. ... We are bound together by our history, our culture, and by our love for our islands and our children—no matter where we live," said Pete Perez.

Those interested in 500 Sails' past and future work can visit their website at 500sails.org.

Michael Bevacqua regularly hosts episodes of the Fanachu Podcast through Facebook Live on its page at <https://www.facebook.com/fanachupodcast>.



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San Nicolas supports Tinian RDHs

Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian) supports the payment of special compensation to Tinian resident department heads who were part of the Municipal Operations Center immediately after Super Typhoon Yutu.

"Tinian residents were devastated by Super Typhoon Yutu. Homes were destroyed, vehicles were toppled, and our basic infrastructure was severely compromised. With no power or water, Tinian needed

every hand on deck to support Homeland Security recovery efforts. We especially needed the RDHs, who had experience in responding to major disasters," said San Nicolas.

Tinian Mayor Edwin P. Aldan recently voiced his concern about calls by the Attorney General's Office for the return of RDH typhoon pay. *(See Page 9)* San Nicolas joins Aldan in opposing the return of the RDH compensation.

"Like Mayor Aldan said,

Tinian only has one Homeland Security [and Emergency Management] employee. When Yutu hit Tinian, RDHs augmented the lack of manpower and provided much needed support and leadership," San Nicolas said.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres issued Executive Order 2018-16 immediately after Yutu hit the Marianas. According to the executive order, a "temporary exemption" was granted

See RDHS on Next Page

PSS is training high schoolers to tutor elementary students in reading, math

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Beginning last week, the CNMI Public School System has held trainings for 230 high school students to be tutors for what PSS calls "High-Dosage Tutoring Program" that will take place over the summer.

Under this program, high school students and a number of adult tutors will spend this summer and the next school year tutoring small groups of elementary students and will be paid \$10 an hour for their work.

Amy Bohman-Blanco, a PSS educator who hopes to rebuild the community through "high-dosage" tutoring, is leading the trainings and program itself. She said the first two days of the training last week were dedicated to presentations on how the program will work overall, and the next three days were dedicated to learning additional information on their future assignments, either through online sessions or sessions at the elementary schools themselves.

For this week, five days of educational training sessions will be held at the Marianas High School cafeteria, where Bohman-Blanco has high hopes for the tutoring program and says the experience will prove useful for these students' careers. "We're learning a lot in the process of getting the program started. ...It's rewarding to see high-school students enjoying the process and getting [early] work experience," said Bohman-Blanco.

When asked about the future of the High-Dosage Tutoring Program, she said, "We're

CNMI Pride Talks at the Legislature

The House Committee on Health and Welfare is hosting the Legislature's first CNMI Pride Talks on Wednesday, June 30, 2021, at 9am at the House of Representatives chamber.

"Pride Talks will include a policy roundtable with leaders from LGBTQ+ organizations and a public forum to discuss the needs of the community and how the Legislature can assist in creating a more inclusive CNMI," said committee chair Rep. Christina Sablan. "The members of the...committee look forward to an open and respectful dialogue about what we can do as a community to better support the health, equality, and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ people in the CNMI."

"Everyone should be af-

going to look at the data and see if we should continue." The program will begin sometime after training concludes, and will run for five weeks. The tutoring program will then start again for the duration of the next school year, and come year-end, Bohman-Blanco will assess the effectiveness of the program.

The funding for the tutoring program comes from the U.S. government's Education Stabilization Fund. Ada signed a certification and agreement that PSS will accept this funding on May 8, 2020.



Tel: (670) 234-8895 | Email: armatech.saipan@gmail.com
Mobile: (670) 287-5525 / (670) 783-8895

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting



Wednesday, July 07, 2021 | 5:00 PM
Charley's, Pacific Islands Club
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666
www.cnmzoning.com



AGENDA

- A. Preliminary Matters
 - 1. Call to Order
 - 2. Roll Call
 - 3. Adoption of Agenda
 - 4. Adoption of 06/16/2021 Zoning Board Meeting minutes and 06/23/2021 Special Zoning Board Meeting minutes.
 - 5. Public Comments (not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)
- B. Public Hearings
 - 1. **Conditional Use Application #2020-6972** – Trinity Logistics, LLC is proposing to operate a used Motor Oil containment site that will be collected and shipped off-island for recycling purposes. Applicant will have a DOT Certified Transport Vacuum Truck that will be picking up the Used Oil and then transferred into a BLT FlexiBag that will be set up in a 9' X 20' Cargo Container. This use is classified as "Manufacturing & Processing" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 012 D 113 in the village of Gualo Rai. This area is zoned as Rural.
 - 2. **Conditional Use Application #2020-7539** – CannaBlyss, Inc is proposing to occupy and renovate two (2) existing single-storey concrete structure for its Cannabis Farm Use. Building A measures 67'.6" (L) x 34'.5" (W) x 12'.3" (H) and Building B measures 40'.8" (L) x 56' (W) x 10'.2" (H). This use is classified as "Cannabis Farm" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 1856 New-6-1 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.
 - 3. **Conditional Use Application #2020-6462** – Top Hatz Saipan, LLC is proposing to occupy and renovate a unit on the 2nd floor of an existing 2-storey building structure measuring 76'.3" (L) x 45'.10" (W) x 16' (H) for its "Adult Business" Use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use and the site is located on Lot No. 002 D 07 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Garapan Core.
 - 4. **Conditional Use Application #2020-7211** – Ocean Spa is proposing to occupy and renovate a unit in the 1st floor of an existing 2-storey building with a floor area measuring 17'.3" (L) x 26'.6" (W) x 9' (H) for its Personal Service-Spa Use. This use is classified as "Personal Service" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 157-5 in the village of As Terlaje. This area is zoned as Village Residential.
- C. Old Business
 - 1. Zoning Office Building Renovations
 - 2. Garapan Revitalization Project
- D. New Business
 - 1. Nuisance Abatement and Blighted Properties Act
 - i. Regulations
 - 2. Administrator's Contract Renewal
- E. Executive Session
- F. Miscellaneous
 - 1. Administrator's Updates
 - 2. Permit & Enforcement Report
- G. Adjournment

In an effort to provide public access to this meeting during this pandemic, the Commonwealth Zoning Board will host this meeting via:

Zoom Video Communications

Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/6853007492>

Meeting Code: 685 300 7492

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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

PROBE ON TORRES' EXPENDITURES STARTS

First lady's ex-security detail, 2 others expected to testify

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee will open its probe into Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' expenditures today with the

MONUMENT

From Page 1

As Asai tells it, the project got started after Nakajima approached him to seek help on how to erect a new memorial at Suicide Cliff.

"Mr. Nakajima is a regular tourist and loves Saipan so he knows all the Japanese landmarks on island. On one trip, he noticed that a memorial monument at Suicide Cliff was gone and he wanted to replace it to continue the tradition of respect to those who died in World War II," Asai said. "With the help of another local organizer, building contractor Mr. Kentaro Suzuki of Moty's Planning, we started to work on it."

Asai said he asked Suzuki if he can shoulder the material and labor cost and he agreed. "The rest of the project was crowdfunded and we all did it as volunteers," he said, adding

testimony of three witnesses, including a police officer who was previously assigned as security detail for first lady Diann Torres.

Committee chair Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) disclosed yesterday that the hearing will start at 2pm

that this is the same group that did the renovation work on the Last Command Post in 2018.

According to Asai, the plan to replace the monument was a team effort. "Nakajima did the work on the Japan side and talked to the Pacific War Memorial Association Inc. in Chiba, Japan and Japan Funding Public Interest Inc. Foundation. For my part, I talked to the Department of Public Lands, Marianas Visitor's Authority, Division of Coastal Resources Management and all gave us permission," he said.

Asai recalls that there were about 30 small statues at Suicide Cliff that were erected by families of war victims but they started disappearing one by one until around 2017, when they were all gone.

"It is still a mystery why the original monuments disappeared. Some say it was due to natural causes but some say [they were] destroyed by

Although the 06W was last seen with maximum sustained winds of up to 40 mph, it is expected to intensify through today. Tropical storm force winds extend northeast from the center up to 90 miles, and up to 45 miles elsewhere.

As of yesterday, all tropical storm warnings and watches have been discontinued for the Marianas.

However, a Flash Flood Watch remains in effect for all of Guam and the Northern Marianas, so the community is still encouraged to listen closely for any flood warnings that might be issued for your area.

Also, hazardous surf of 9 to 12 feet are present in east and south facing reefs of the Marianas until 10am today morning. This will create danger-

funding can only be used for specific marketing activities so they have identified three allowable areas in this funding to be applied to.

The first one is development of global brand and relating marketing strategies and that they are preparing a request for proposal for this.

She said they had issued an RFP for global branding about three years ago but they weren't able to move forward due to unavailability of funds.

The second activity, Iakopo said, is offshore office representations for promotions and public relations. She said this will be used exclusively for Japan and Taiwan offices and that these are new contracts that will require new RFPs. Iakopo noted that these contracts will be expiring Sept. 30, 2021 with no option to renew.

The third activity is a variety of marketing local culture and values that involves youth invested on indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian culture. Iakopo said this includes, for example, the Hafa Adai and Tirow Pledge program that they launched

with police officer Jomalyn Santos Gelacio, Mathilda Rosario, who is the special assistant for administration to the governor, and Bernie Palacios, who is the chief of finance and accounting.

Babauta said all three have not given

men. We will never know the real reason," he said.

The important thing, Asai said, is they have replaced these small statues with one big monument "so people will have a symbol to remember war victims by."

Asai said that the newly erected monument is made of one large boulder so it will remain strong and intact during storms and can withstand any attempt to vandalize it. "We started mid-May and finished the project last June 16. The words written in Japanese on the monument is translated in English as, 'Not forgotten tough times, peace for the world.'"

"We want people to understand that this monument is not only to honor Japanese people who died during the war but for all people. It is a historical touchstone that gives respect to all the victims and we should not forget what happened to those people," he added.

ous swimming and surfing conditions and cause localized beach erosion.

The passage of Tropical Depression 06W caused surf to quickly build to hazardous levels last night. Once 06W moves west of the islands into the Philippine Sea, surf will quickly subside.

The public, beachgoers, and mariners are reminded to continue to exercise precautionary measures when entering the water. Inexperienced swimmers should remain out of the water due to dangerous surf conditions.

Mariners should consider altering plans to avoid possible hazardous conditions. Remain in port, seek safe harbor, alter course, and/or secure the vessel for severe wind and seas.

last month and other related projects that will help the CNMI destination standout among other competing beach resort destinations.

In recounting where MVA is right now, Iakopo said the COVID-19 happened at the beginning of fiscal year 2020 was so there was a quick drop off in arrivals. Things have gotten so bad that the CNMI is now only receiving less than 200 visitors a month and that majority of them are through Guam.

Due to the very low number of visitors, the Legislature appropriated just \$2.2 million to MVA for this current fiscal year.

Iakopo said for much of fiscal year 2020 and the first several months of this fiscal year, they could operate with only 12 out of 34 staff on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

For fiscal year 2022, MVA is requesting an appropriation of \$3.29 million to fund the operations of its eight divisions.

"You can see that in the prior years in our budget was much greater," she said.

en her any indication that they will not be attending the hearing, so she expects them to be present.

She did not specify as to what Gelacio will be testifying about.

In the case of Rosario, Babauta said the witness submitted an inventory list last year to the House special committee that investigated Torres' expenditures so they will be asking her questions about that list.

Palacios, on the other hand, would be speaking about procedures that the Department of Finance has adopted with respect to reimbursement, travel, and finance and accounting procedures.

Babauta said the hearing will then

continue this Friday at 2pm.

She said they are getting ready to issue more 1309 letters this week requesting for documents and testimony as well. A Letter 1309 in the Commonwealth Code refers to the acquisition of information by other lawful means.

Babauta recently announced the start of JGO's investigation pertaining to Torres' expenditures related to COVID-19 procurement, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC matters, and travel and reimbursements.

Press secretary Kevin Bautista has characterized the JGO investigation as a political tactic.

■ Keep pools and spas chlorinated and filtered.

■ Stock ornamental ponds with mosquito-eating fish.

■ Cover rain barrels with screening.

■ Check for standing water under houses, near plumbing drains, under air conditioner drip areas, around septic tanks, and water pumps.

■ Take steps to eliminate standing water, improve drainage, and prevent future puddling.

It's important for residents to remember the four Ds of mosquito prevention:

1. **Drain:** Empty out water containers and scrub the sides to remove mosquito eggs at least once every 5 days.

2. **Dress:** Wear long sleeves, long pants, and light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

3. **Defend:** Properly apply an EPA-Registered mosquito repellent such as DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or Oil of Lemon-Eucalyptus.

4. **Dusk and Dawn:** Avoid activity during those times when mosquitoes are most active.

Dengue fever symptoms

See your healthcare provider if you experience any of the symptoms of dengue fever, such as high fever, severe headache, severe pain behind the eyes, joint pain, muscle and bone pain, rash, and mild bleeding usually around nose or gums. Generally, younger children and those with their first dengue infection have a milder illness than older children and adults.

Visit your nearest hospital emergency room if you experience any of the following symptoms of Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever, the severe form of the disease, which is characterized by a fever that lasts from two to seven days, and can be followed by persistent vomiting, severe abdominal pain, and difficulty breathing. In addition, patients with DHF tend to bruise easily or experience other skin hemorrhages and possibly even bleed internally.

The Guam Public Health Laboratory conducts tests for dengue including serotyping. (PR)

RDHS

From Page 3

from any Commonwealth regulation that would tend to prevent, hinder, or delay any action the Homeland Security Office deemed necessary when assisting and supporting the Commonwealth in its recovery from Typhoon Yutu.

On Nov. 16, 2018, Torres issued Directive 2018-003 authorizing all CNMI government organizations and employees to receive a special compensation of 2.5 times the base salary for work directly related to the Commonwealth's recovery efforts to meet the exceptional challenges of recovery and of repairing the tremendous damage from the typhoon. (PR)

TSL Foundation provides gifts bags to graduates

The Tan Siu Lin Foundation recently provided gift bags to the graduates of Kagman High School, Chacha Oceania View Middle School, and Da'ok Academy.

The gift bags, which included a mug and a personalized shirt, were presented to the students during their respective graduation and promotion ceremonies.

"The beautiful T-shirt will remind them of all the hard work and dedication they put in the school year," said Da'ok Academy principal Christine Tudela, who reached out to the TSL Foundation after Kagman's commencement exercises and saw the gift bags given to the Ayuyus' Class of 2021.

Da'ok Academy received 31 gift bags, while the TSL Foundation gave the same package to the school's eight faculty and staff. Kagman graduates and

faculty and staff received 150, while Chacha got 106.

Kagman principal Ben Jones extended his appreciation to the TSL Foundation for its support to the Ayuyus.

"We are grateful for the partnership. Since the school year began, the TSL Foundation has given the kids a strong support by providing them with laptop bags. Now, the foundation has also provided each of our graduates a gift bag," said Jones, adding that the Ayuyus are excited to support the TSL Foundation in its community activities to repay its kindness.

Chacha principal Martha Kintol also acknowledged the TSL Foundation for its generosity, especially the students. She said the gift bags were distributed to all 8th grade as part of an incentive package given last June 3 during their promotion ceremony.



This combo photo shows Da'ok Academy principal Christine Tudela, third from left, and Kagman High School principal Ben Jones, right, posing with the gift bags Tan Siu Lin Foundation donated for the graduates of their schools. Also in the photo are, from left, TanHoldings comptroller Judy Mendieta, TanHoldings chief executive officer Jerry Tan, Da'ok Academy graduate Ryota Izutan Castro, TSL Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino, TanHoldings senior vice president Eli Arago, and TSL Foundation assistant manager Raymond Zapanta.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

TSL Foundation executive director Merlie Tolentino said the gift bags were just a small token for the big accomplishments of the Class of 2021 in these challenging times.

"Congratulations on your graduation and promotion. It was not easy achieving this goal because of the pandemic, but through your hard work, resilience, and dedication and the support of the people around you, especially your parents and teachers, you were able to make it. Good luck and on to your next journey," Tolentino said. (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Emergency water service interruption

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. implemented an emergency water service interruption yesterday at 12pm that will last until 6am today, June 23, 2021, for customers in Upper Navy Hill, Chalan Galaide, China Town, Upper MIHA, and As Falape.

The emergency water service interruption is due to the low tank level at the Calhoun water tank. CUC water operators are isolating the tank service area to attempt to raise the water level. Because of the consistent low levels being attained in the Calhoun water tank, customers in the affected areas will continue

to experience low pressure to no water until the low water tank level is corrected.

For more information, contact the CUC Hotline (236-4333) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). (PR)

Store's shortened hours

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store will be adjusting its hours for inventory on Sunday, June 27, and Monday, June 28.

On Sunday, it will be open only from 7am to 3pm.

On Monday, it will be open only from 9am to 9pm. (PR)

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW21-ITB-026**

SUBMISSION DATE: July 14, 2021 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"Renovation of Government House
No. 1344 Capitol Hill, Saipan"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAIC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **July 02, 2021**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the **Project Site Government House No. 1344**, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **July 07, 2021** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

**/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW**

**/S/ JOSEPH P. DELEON GUERRERO
Secretary of DCCA**

**/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES**



NMPASI NORTHERN MARIANAS PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEMS, INC.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

NMPASI hereby seeks comments and/or suggestions from the community on how to improve upon its proposed Statement of Goals & Priorities for fiscal year 2022 as follows:

Statement of Goals and Priorities [Fiscal Year 2022]

[CLIENT / COMMUNITY SERVICES]

GOAL 1: To provide legally-based advocacy services on behalf of individuals with disabilities and their families in the CNMI.

Priority 1.1: Facilitate appropriate advocacy and provide direct representation for eligible individuals with disabilities in the community (at least one more than the previous fiscal year).

Priority 1.2: Facilitate sufficient technical assistance to individuals with disabilities, family members of individuals with disabilities and other members of the general community at large.

Priority 1.3: Facilitate appropriate representation for un/underserved individuals with disabilities (including but not limited to those living in institutions or other housing facilities).

GOAL 2: To advance the understanding of and appreciation for Protection & Advocacy services and disability-related issues in the CNMI.

Priority 2.1: Facilitate opportunities for the community to engage in learning about disability-related issues.

Priority 2.2: Promote the understanding of local and federal disability laws.

Priority 2.3: Foster local capacity in self-advocacy for individuals with disabilities.

[ADMINISTRATION/OPERATIONS]

GOAL 3: To enhance the quality of protection & advocacy services and the efficiency of the organization's operations.

Priority 3.1: Maintain an efficient, effective and legally-compliant administrative operation.

Priority 3.2: Maintain an effective, diverse and knowledgeable staff and board of directors.

Priority 3.3: Ensure sufficient and sustainable funding in support of organization's mission.

For anything further, please feel free to contact the NMPASI Office at (670) 235-7273/4 [tel.] / 235-7275 [fax] / 287-0652 [text message] or contact us on-line at www.nmpasi.org.

**NMPASI, a local non-profit organization, administers grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS)/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD), and the Human Resources Services Administration (HRSA), the U.S. Department of Education (DOE)/Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and the Social Security Administration (SSA).*

PSS SPED holds end-of-year professional development

The Public School System's Special Education Program successfully conducted its end-of-year professional development on June 16, 2021. This was done with the partnership and support of the University of Guam's Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Research, and Services.

PSS-Special Education director Donna Flores said the professional development was "focused on increasing school and staff and personnel mo-

rale, and promoting a proactive school culture."

UOG CEDDERS acting director June De Leon facilitated the professional development.

This was PSS' largest gathering yet, with 175 special education staff, bus drivers, bus conductors, classroom teachers, teacher aides, and related service and school administrators on Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

The event closed with a self-care painting activity with instructor Linda Torres. (PSS)



The PSS-SPED central office personnel.



Capping the daylong professional development was a self-care painting activity. This was facilitated by instructor Linda Torres.



UOG-CEDDERS acting director June De Leon and PSS Special Education director Donna Flores poses with PSS Special Education data and compliance program manager Nora Fujihira, Special Education data specialist Lucille Deleon Guerrero, and PSS network specialist Ferdie Ngirmekur.



Board of Education chair Andrew L. Orsini, vice chair Herman Atalig, Tinian board member Antonio Borja, and Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada joins Special Education director Donna Flores and UOG-CEDDERS acting director June De Leon.



Participants from Hopwood Middle School.



Participants listen to University of Guam CEDDERS acting director June De Leon's presentation.



One of the many activities that required audience participation.



These PSS personnel from Saipan, Tinian and Rota participated in a daylong end-of-year professional development initiated by the district's Special Education Program.



One of the activities involved sharing and reflection.



Members of the Office of Pupil Transportation.



An "interactive" activity was also designed to engage all Rota, Tinian and Saipan participants.



Participants of the SPED professional development show off some of the finished paintings.



PSS personnel are focused on the self-care painting activity.

NMC's Paulaine Sasamoto completes data science training

Paulaine Sasamoto, a first-year nursing student at the Northern Marianas College, recently completed the one-month 2021 Virtual Summer Data Science Institute through Chaminade University's Supporting Pacific Indigenous Computing Excellence Grant.

"The whole journey has been great," Sasamoto said. "Obviously, there were times where I doubted myself whether I [could] find sufficient datasets that fit into my project bid and confusion on what went wrong in my

R studios code. However, it helps to have a welcoming environment of faculty members and mentors offering their help outside of the program work hours."

Sasamoto's project while in the program was to investigate if there's an association between urbanization and the prevalence of Type 2 diabetes.

Held from May 24 to June 18, 2021, the Virtual Summer Data Science Institute is a data science research immersion program for students and working professionals, focused upon building data

science capacity in Hawaii and the Pacific region.

The program is funded by the National Science Foundation, the NSF Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment, the Texas Advanced Computing Center and is hosted by Chaminade University. The program provides a data science research-based experience where participants can examine a data set of their choice with the assistance and train-



Sasamoto

ing from world-class experts in the fields of statistics, analytics, visualization and decision support.

Sasamoto's adviser, NMC Nursing Department chair Rosa Aldan, said that this is the first time that an NMC Nursing Student was selected to participate in a data science research-based training opportunity and she is very proud of her to be amongst other college students from the Pacific region and the U.S. mainland.

"We were very excited to hear that she was accepted into the program last May," Aldan said. "I am extremely proud of her work and for going through such a rigorous training program."

Sasamoto said that completing the program wasn't as hard due to the support she received from her mentors and instructors. "I would like to thank Mr. Johnny Tudela Aldan for providing additional resources on how to operate [the coding software] R, helping me finalize my project bid and providing feedback on what

direction I should go with my project," Sasamoto said.

She also thanked her mentor, Krystin Vanic, and SPICE program faculty member Dr. Laura Tipton.

Sasamoto encourages everyone to participate in an internship program should they get the chance to. "For anyone wondering if they should consider applying for an internship or program but think they aren't properly suited for it, give it a shot and believe in yourself because you can surprise yourself," Sasamoto said. (NMC)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING for Ocean Spa

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Ocean Spa is proposing to occupy and renovate a unit in the 1st floor of an existing 2-storey building with a floor area measuring 17'.3" (L) x 26'.6" (W) x 9' (H) for its Personal Service-Spa Use. This use is classified as "Personal Service" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 157-5 in the village of As Terlaje. This area is zoned as Village Residential.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: July 07, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Charley's, Pacific Islands Club

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, July 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING for Top Hatz Saipan, LLC

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Top Hatz Saipan, LLC is proposing to occupy and renovate a unit on the 2nd floor of an existing 2-storey building structure measuring 76'.3" (L) x 45'.10" (W) x 16' (H) for its "Adult Business" Use. This use is permitted in the district as a conditional use and the site is located on Lot No. 002 D 07 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Garapan Core.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: July 07, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Charley's, Pacific Islands Club

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, July 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

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/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING for Trinity Logistics, LLC

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Trinity Logistics, LLC is proposing to operate a used Motor Oil containment site that will be collected and shipped off-island for recycling purposes. Applicant will have a DOT Certified Transport Vacuum Truck that will be picking up the Used Oil and then transferred into a BLT FlexiBag that will be set up in a 9' x 20' Cargo Container. This use is classified as "Manufacturing & Processing" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 012 D 113 in the village of Gualo Rai. This area is zoned as Rural.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: July 07, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Charley's, Pacific Islands Club

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, July 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING for CannaBlyss, Inc.

The Public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board Public Hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. CannaBlyss, Inc is proposing to occupy and renovate two (2) existing single-storey concrete structure for its Cannabis Farm Use. Building A measures 67'.6" (L) x 34'.5" (W) x 12'.3" (H) and Building B measures 40'.8" (L) x 56' (W) x 10'.2" (H). This use is classified as "Cannabis Farm" and is permitted in the district as a conditional use. This site is located on Lot No. 1856 New-6-1 in the village of Garapan. This area is zoned as Mixed Commercial.

A public hearing will be held on:

Date: July 07, 2021
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Charley's, Pacific Islands Club

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office before 4:30 pm, July 6, 2021. Please send written comments via e-mail to zoningboard@cnmizoning.com. via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq.) and the Amended Saipan Zoning Law of 2013.

/s/ Tatiana Babauta, Chairwoman



PUBLIC NOTICE

The Office of Grants Management and State Clearinghouse, under the Office of the Governor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, hereby give notice to all eligible CNMI stakeholders of the available grant funding opportunity for projects that correspond with the CNMI Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). As of fiscal year 2021, The CNMI has been awarded \$3.8 million. This funding was made available by The National Park Service (NPS) through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), 54 U.S.C. § 200305.

All eligible stakeholders are encouraged to contact Grants Specialist, Ed Hofschneider Jr. from the Office of Grants Management and State Clearinghouse at (670) 237-2220 or by email at cnmi.scorp@gmail.com.

The opening date for LWCF State Assistance Formula Grants - Construction - FY21 Cycle 2 is June 2, 2021 and the closing date is July 30, 2021. All eligible stakeholders are encouraged to review grant notice P21AS00540 at grants.gov for guidelines and other documentation requirements.

/s/ Epiphanio E. Cabrera Jr.
Administrator, OGM / State Liaison Officer, LWCF

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Special Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Thursday, June 24, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.** in MVA's Conference Room, Saipan, MP 96950.

MEETING AGENDA

- 1) Preliminary Matters
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
- 2) Public Comments
- 3) Old Business
 - a. Revised FY 2022 Budget
- 4) New Business
 - a. Proposed Community Event
- 5) Executive Session
- 6) Miscellaneous/Announcements
- 7) Adjournment

/s/ Viola Alepuyo
Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

A narrow victory for religious freedom over gay equality

Advocates of equal rights for same-sex couples feared the worst when the Supreme Court agreed to hear the appeal of a Catholic agency that faced the loss of its city contract because it declined to work with gay and lesbian prospective foster parents. On Thursday, the justices ruled for the agency, but in a reassuringly narrow way that doesn't create a gaping exception to anti-discrimination laws.

The court held that the city of Philadelphia violated the First Amendment rights of Catholic Social Services when it barred the agency from screening the parents. Citing its religious beliefs about marriage, the Catholic agency had refused to work with same-sex couples, though it was willing to refer such couples to other providers. (The agency also wouldn't certify unmarried heterosexual couples as foster parents.)

The case of *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, growing out of a lawsuit filed by Catholic Social Services and three foster parents affiliated with the agency, was viewed by religious conservatives and civil rights groups alike as potentially a major ruling on how the court would balance anti-discrimination protections for gays and lesbians with religious freedom. In prohibiting the Catholic agency from screening prospective foster parents, Philadelphia officials cited a city ordinance outlawing discrimination in public accommodations as well as nondiscrimination language in the contract.

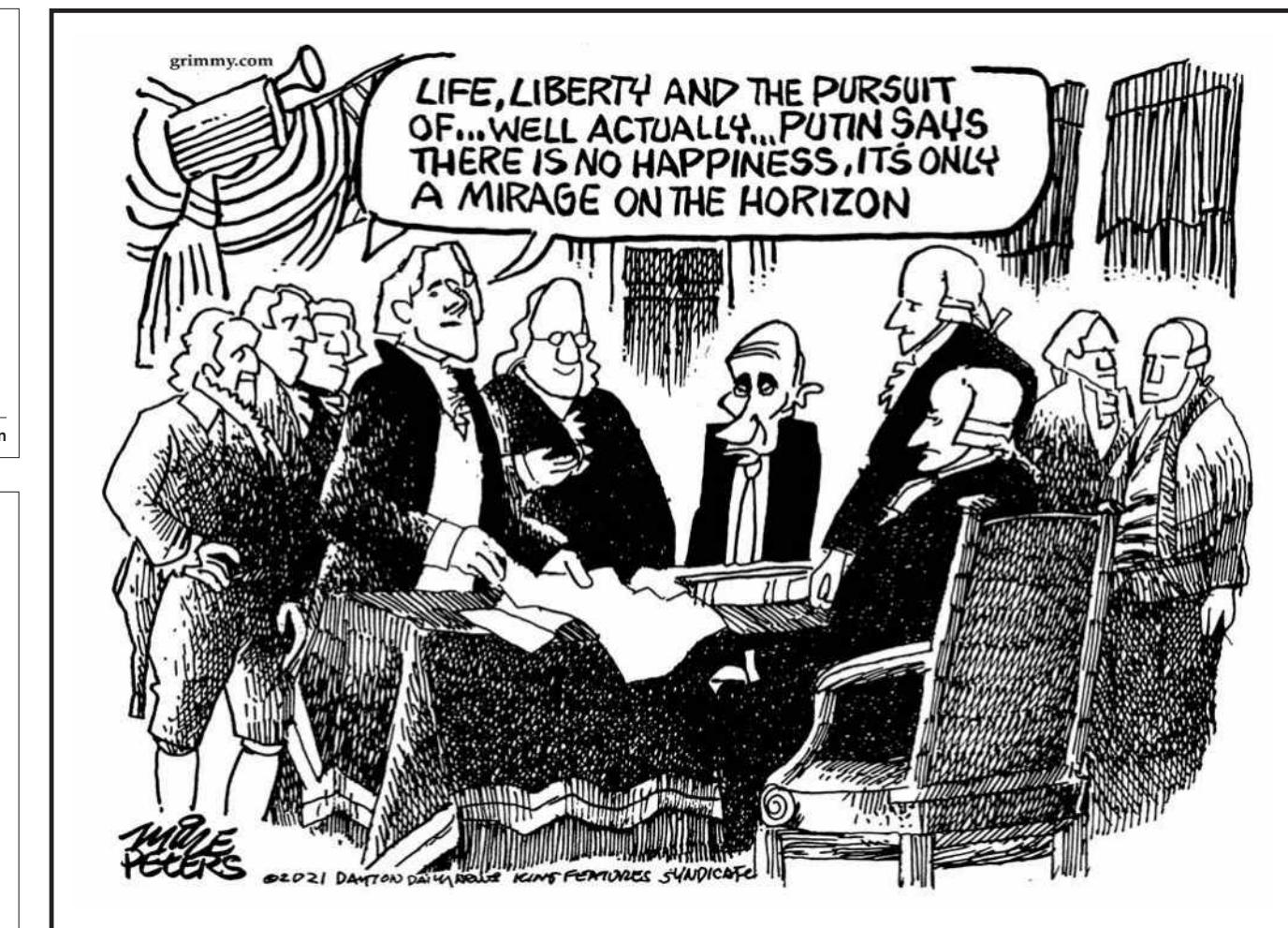
Thursday's ruling wasn't the landmark decision some hoped for and others feared. The court ruled unanimously for Catholic Social Services, but the majority opinion by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., joined by five other members of the court, focused narrowly on the facts of the case.

Roberts noted that Philadelphia's standard foster care contract said that agencies couldn't reject prospective foster parents because of their sexual orientation, but that it also allowed for exceptions from that policy at the "sole discretion" of a city official. By failing to provide a compelling reason for not providing such an exemption for Catholic Social Services, Roberts said, the city had violated the agency's right to free exercise of religion.

The chief justice also said that Philadelphia's ordinance prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in public accommodation didn't apply to participation in the city's foster care system. Certification as a foster parent, he wrote, "is not readily accessible to the public. It involves a customized and selective assessment that bears little resemblance to staying in a hotel, eating at a restaurant, or riding a bus."

We continue to find it troubling that an agency that engages in discrimination can receive a contract from the government, even if the agency is motivated by sincere religious convictions. But this ruling could have been worse.

This is neither the first nor the last time the court will have to address the tension between anti-discrimination



For women in science, 'visibility' isn't always a good thing

One of my mentees, a young doctor, laughed when I recently told her how two of my adult daughters crawled across the bedroom floor to take a photo of my computer screen because Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr and Dr. Anthony Fauci were both part of my Zoom meeting. But our conversation quickly turned to how being forced to parent a young child while on Zoom makes her feel exposed, her role as a parent more visible than she would like it to be at work. She feels judged, she said, as she deals with her child's fussing and entertainment and food needs—while fellow Zoomers suggest she mute her sound so they don't have to hear the background noise of her life.

She worries that this mothering on camera will cause her to be taken less seriously by the men around her at our research-focused university, that she won't be seen for her hard work and successes. She isn't concerned about her male peers, whose children also pop up in meetings. It's the senior male colleagues she worries about, "you know," she says, "the ones with the power." Many women I mentor are also underrepresented people of color, and they tell me the sexism they encounter is often compounded by racism.

These concerns reflect national trends for women who are mothers and for women who are not. A 2016 survey of junior faculty with recent career development awards showed that almost 1 in 3 female faculty members reported gender harassment at work. The numbers are even higher in other institutions—more than 50% of female faculty and staff experienced sexually harassing behavior in academic science and medicine, according to a 2018 report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine. In addition, women from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups experienced harassment more than white women did. People in the study who underwent harassment said they often feel less confident and believe such episodes will negatively affect career advancement.

When I share my own stories of sexism in the scientific workplace, my mentees are both surprised and then reassured—because I got past the challenges. For instance, after I failed to receive a fellowship I had applied for, a senior male faculty member observed, "Well, you did go and have that third baby," as if that prevented me from focusing on my work. Later, during my annual performance review, this same supervisor told me I had earned a "C" for bringing in grants but an "A" for publishing research papers. I would "pass" to the next assistant professor step, he assured me, because "people liked me" and

By MARGARET HANDLEY

Los Angeles Times

Margaret Handley is an epidemiologist and professor at UC San Francisco, where she co-directs the Partnerships for Research in Implementation Science for Equity Center.



I had "a nice smile."

While such comments are reportable offenses, I chose instead to get myself into a better environment, a different department where I would have more supportive supervisors. I wanted to work in a more positive, collaborative space and it felt easier, and perhaps wiser, to avoid the offender rather than report him.

The worst part of being visible (being described by my appearance at work) and invisible (not being seen for my work accomplishments) is that they are both products of the male gaze. The message to me was clear: My appearance and personal behavior mattered—having too many children for scientific research, being likable rather than capable, being seen as "sliding" through on impressions rather than earning my place.

When I met with the dozen or so women I mentor to prepare for their academic reviews, the topics of visibility and how much they should disclose about the challenges of working during the COVID-19 pandemic were at the top of my list of things to discuss. They asked about how much they should share about how COVID-19 impacts them at work and home and ways it can interfere with their workplace productivity. Depending on what level of support they perceive in their department, my advice varies from "tell it like it is and ask for more support" to "can you find out what policies your institution has in place to make things more equitable for you?"

Conversations such as these make me concerned for younger generations of women in science. I believe that keeping silent as I did can contribute to the institutionalization of workarounds, such as the departmental transfer I made. Yet I know that these experiences are not our problems to fix. The problems do not arise from individual actions but from institutional culture. And while I am fortunate that my institution is taking these problems seriously, many of the women I work with feel unsettled.

See WOMEN on Next Page

See EQUALITY on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Tinian mayor disagrees with AG's demand for repayment of Yutu overtime paid to Tinian resident department heads

For those who do not live on Tinian, it is easy to forget two and a half years after Super Typhoon Yutu the total destruction and devastation the second worst storm in U.S. history had on the island of Tinian. Tinian was ground zero and it has been documented that Yutu affected the lives of every single resident on Tinian.

For weeks after the typhoon, there was no power, there was no city water, there was no fuel, there was no access to money, there was no bottled water or ice, there was no laundry service, there was no access to food other than canned food, and countless residents lost their homes and all of their personal belongings.

Unfortunately for the people of Tinian, we remember that day as if it was yesterday. As the mayor of Tinian, I unequivocally disagree with the Attorney General's opinion that Tinian resident department heads are not entitled to overtime pay as Yutu was a unique and catastrophic event requiring the governor to exert his emergency authority to respond to the disaster.

Moreover, the management of emergencies and disasters in the CNMI is the responsibility of Homeland Security Emergency Management. Tinian, however, only has one HSEM employee and he does not have the authority to manage a disaster the magnitude of Yutu.

Because this was the first super typhoon to hit two islands, HSEM had to focus on Saipan and, as the incoming mayor, I

was required to activate my Municipal Operations Command to manage the response and recovery on Tinian.

I activated every single CNMI and municipal employee, to include RDHs, to assist with each and every aspect of our response and recovery efforts. They assisted the Federal Emergency Management Agency with the Individual and Public Assistance programs, the Small Business Administration with client applications, the American Red Cross with distribution of food and financial assistance, management of the distribution center, clearing of roads, crowd control, distribution of water, Tetris program, shelters, shipping logistics, and counseling. Every hour of overtime worked was documented on CAT B forms and approved by HSEM.

I am aware that some of the members of the Legislature have been pushing for the repayment of Yutu overtime hours for quite some time and I am disappointed by their attempt to play politics with this issue that affected so many lives on Tinian. None of them were on Tinian during Yutu and I wonder if any of them had any participation in the response or recovery efforts to truly understand the immense sacrifice Tinian's RDHs made to leave their families and destroyed homes to report to work to assist our community. And now, two and a half years later, they are told to repay their overtime. Which begs the equity question: Will these same public officials also look into any overtime paid for

By EDWIN P. ALDAN
Special to the *Saipan Tribune*



Edwin P. Aldan is mayor of the Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan.

typhoons Sol delor and Mangkhut and demand for repayment? They should be ashamed to politicize an issue that was so devastating to the people of Tinian and I applaud the governor for his quick response to the disaster and his leadership in issuing his emergency directive for overtime pay.

But this issue cannot end here as we all know that the next super typhoon is just around the corner. Therefore, in order to ensure that the people of Tinian and Rota will have proper and effective management for future emergencies and disasters, I will ask the Legislature to pass a law approving overtime pay for RDHs in times of emergencies and disasters for the islands of Tinian and Rota and I look to all members of the Legislature for your full support.

Grand opening! The refugees' peril-free place to be

Looking back, Vice President Kamala Harris's first major mission as the highest-ranking woman in the history of the United States – her trip to Guatemala and Mexico this past week to ease, if not resolve, the surging refugee crisis at our southwest border – really wasn't as imperfect as some critics and pundits are saying.

But it was discouraging. And mainly, it was a missed opportunity to send a powerful and humane message to desperate people who needed to hear it the most. Namely: those hundreds of thousands of despairing men, women, teens and little children who are about to risk their lives, and may well waste their last dollars, on criminal coyotes who promised to somehow smuggle them into the USA.

Harris arrived in an increasingly dysfunctional region just as U.S. officials announced that in May, more than 180,000 refugees had surged to the U.S.-Mexico border seeking asylum – the highest monthly total in two decades. And on June 6, Mexico held nationwide elections after a 10-month campaign in which 91 politicians were reportedly murdered – 36 of them aspiring candidates.

Those of us who watched Harris in action, respected her skills and hoped she would succeed in helping humanity, were sad to realize neither she nor her corps of Biden-Harris experts and advisers seemed to grasp how they could have been making good things happen at the intersection of the news media, policy and politics. (Memo to Message Manipulators: It happens just the same way at those intersections in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico as it does back in Washington.)

Today we are spotlighting the powerful message/policy tools the Biden-Harris team left unused in their toolbox – a missed opportunity that could have been more effective in communicating to hundreds of thousands of desperate Central Americans who are homeless and/or jobless. Also people in those long-corrupted countries who thugs threatened to injure or kill if they didn't pay protection money to gangs that are also paying cops and judges to look the other way.

No wonder those frantic people have been easy marks for coyotes who conned them into believing the U.S. border was opening up – so they gave smugglers maybe \$5,000 to be jammed cheek-to-jowl in panel trucks that would take them to the border. Smugglers promised to somehow get them onto U.S. land so they could surrender, apply for asylum, and live in U.S. shelters waiting for officials to let them in.

In Guatemala, Harris rambled at length before issuing a planned but only quasi-convincing warning: "Do not come (to the U.S.-Mexico border) ... I believe if you come to our border, you will be turned back." She also announced another batch of bureaucratic-sounding policies: the creation of a joint "Anticor-

ruption Task Force," a "Human Smuggling and Corruption Task Force." It all sounded like more talk about aid that won't ever reach them (because it never has before). So the surge surges on.

Predictably, U.S. reporters repeatedly asked her the gotcha questions that were being dished by Republican critics: Why didn't she go to the border? Astonishingly, she seemed shocked each time. Finally, when NBC's Lester Holt pressed her about it Monday, she snapped: "And I haven't been to Europe. And I mean, I don't understand the point you are making." CNN's Jake Tapper reported that gaffe led to not just predictable criticism from the right and left, but also from anonymous White House sources.

But wait! Suppose the Biden-Harris thinkologists had used their message-molding tools and started her trip to start at the border with refugees telling her about the misery of their month-long trek to the border. Suppose she then went to Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras – and cut a ribbon opening a Top Priority Refugee Asylum Application & Processing Center in each country. Suppose she announced that from now on, these new "Top Priority" centers are the only places where "top priority" processing will be rapidly done. (It is, after all, an existing procedure done in U.S. consulates each country anyway.)

Let the TV cameras record it all. Let the veep explain that starting now there is zero advantage to surging hopelessly to the border. Show video of people being returned from the border to await in these new centers back in their home countries while their relatives in San Diego and Cleveland were contacted.

Don't admit the drug gang punks. But admit all refugees who indeed have relatives in the USA, who just want to work – and send money home to their families.

Team Biden-Harris can still make that message and broadcast it through the Americas. It's not too late to show asylum seekers that, from now on, these all new, humanitarian centers are every refugee's top-priority, peril-free place to be.

EQUALITY

From Page 8

provisions and religious freedom, which is guaranteed not only by the First Amendment but also by state and federal laws, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act signed by President Bill Clinton in 1993.

In balancing those interests, the court must not allow religious freedom to become an all-purpose license to discriminate. Thanks to Roberts' judicious approach, it stopped short of creating such a blanket exception in this case.

By MARTIN SCHRAM
Tribune News Service



Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive. Readers may send him email at martin.schram@gmail.com.

EPILOGUE: It is late at night and I am googling to find an example I can show you of a well-intentioned but overreaching U.S. aid program that failed to reach Latin America's lower income workers who most needed our help. Up pops a perfect example of speaking truth to power.

It's from the JFK-LBJ era. A government consultant wrote a memo warning foreign aid officials that a planned low cost housing project would be building homes that were too costly for the workers they're supposed to be helping. The memo, really quite gutsy, urged that the U.S. build lower cost, truly affordable housing. And it questioned whether the project really was "designed to impress the USA (powers) ... rather than serve the (workers') practical necessities."

The memo was spotted and quoted by a Stony Brook University grad student, Michael J. Murphy, in his 2013 doctoral dissertation: "The costs for workers seeking to purchase homes in these housing projects caught the attention of Marlo J. Schram..." – OMG! – that's my dad he's quoting! Well of course. Dad was always about helping people buy their first house – a dream many in the world still think will only come true for others. Dad's been gone 17 years now. Yet as another Father's Day approaches, we all think about our dads and always enjoy those fun times that still make us smile.

WOMEN

From Page 8

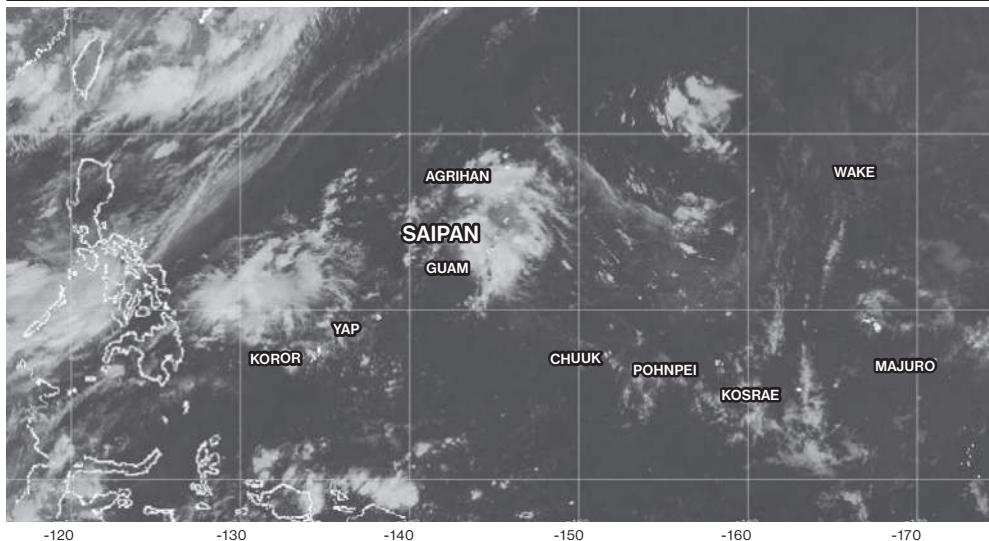
I echo the calls for institutional changes in family-friendly policies and career advancement criteria that others have made, and don't want to see these efforts sidelined by the pandemic. We must establish and enrich equity-oriented programs that, among other things, diversify department leadership, promote bias training, increase peer mentoring and formalize advancement and salary equity reviews. If this work is done comprehensively, it could mean that the next round of stories I hear from the young women I so admire will be about their scientific endeavors and accomplishments—instead of concerns about how they are seen.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Southeast winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
88°	78°	88°	78°	87°
76°	87°	76°	87°	76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 11:13 AM, TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Tropical Depression 06W is moving through southwestern Guam waters. Doppler weather radar, turned on just for the tropical depression, shows widespread showers, with locally heavy showers moving toward Guam. The buoys reveal combined seas of 4 to 7 feet in the CNMI and 8 to 11 feet in Guam waters, composed mainly of swell and wind waves from the tropical depression.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20

seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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MICRONESIA		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:48 AM	6:50 PM
Thursday	5:48 AM	6:50 PM
Friday	5:48 AM	6:50 PM
Saturday	5:49 AM	6:50 PM
Sunday	5:49 AM	6:50 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:53 AM	5:16 PM
Thursday	-	4:50 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	-	5:52 AM	7:28 PM
Saturday	-	6:56 AM	8:29 PM
Sunday	-	8:01 AM	9:24 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	57° / 54°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	95° / 73°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	88° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	85° / 74°
London	Showers	66° / 55°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	76° / 61°
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	54° / 36°
Miami	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
New York	Partly Cloudy	87° / 73°
Osaka	Rain	84° / 75°
Paris	Showers	70° / 57°
Busan	Showers	81° / 73°
Rome	Showers	84° / 70°
Salem	Thunderstorms	81° / 70°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	62° / 51°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	88° / 72°
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	82° / 73°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	93° / 75°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
5:09 AM	High Tide	2.25
12:33 PM	Low Tide	-0.26
7:39 PM	High Tide	2.10
-	-	-

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 20, 2021

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS							
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN							
UA117 6:30am 7:10am 1, 3, 5, 6,				UA174 4:50am 5:31am 1, 3, 5, 6,							
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				UA184/174 9:50pm 5:31am+1 5 via Guam							
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				UA184 9:50pm 3:45am+1 5							
UA183 7:05pm 8:50pm 5				UA184 10:25pm 4:10am+1 1, 3							
UA183 7:15pm 9:10pm 1, 3,				LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.											
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021											
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1202 8:00 8:15 Daily							
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1203 9:00 9:15 Daily	1204 10:00 10:15 Daily	1205 11:00 11:15 Daily	1206 12:00 12:15 Temporarily Unavailable				
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Daily	1207 13:0							

Business

Powell says economy growing rapidly, inflation up 'notably'

Biden, GOP struggle over infrastructure costs

WASHINGTON (AP)—

Congressional negotiators and the White House appear open to striking a roughly \$1 trillion deal on infrastructure. But they are struggling with the hard part—how to pay for it.

As President Joe Biden jumps back into the talks this week, the question of where the money will come from looms large. And time is running short to solve it.

Biden wants to increase taxes for corporations and those households making more than \$400,000 a year. Republicans have ruled that out, putting forward alternatives that Democrats find unacceptable. Both sides have said the infrastructure spending should be paid for and not add to the national debt.

It's a long-standing challenge with no easy solution, one that puts the bipartisan agreement around infrastructure in tension with the nettle-some realities of governing. It's a problem that has thwarted previous attempts at an infrastructure bill, including during

the Trump administration, and their ability to solve it now is likely to determine whether a bipartisan accord is possible.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has said user fees are the way to go. But the White House and key Democratic lawmakers oppose increasing the user fee that has traditionally funded road and bridge construction, the federal gas tax, even if the increase is just allowing it to rise at the rate of inflation from its current level of 18.4 cents per gallon. The federal gas tax has not increased since 1993.

"The president's pledge was not to raise taxes on Americans making less than \$400,000 a year, and the proposed gas tax or vehicle mileage tax would do exactly that," said White House press secretary Jen Psaki. "So that is a nonstarter for him. I'd also note for the mathematicians in the room that only raises \$40 billion, which is a fraction of what this proposal would cost."

Biden hosted two key Democratic senators, Joe Manchin

of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, at the White House on Monday. He told them he was encouraged by the plans that were taking shape but still had questions about the policy and the financing for the proposal, a White House official said. Biden also said he was focused on budget resolution discussions.

The two senators were among a group huddling late Monday at the Capitol, some emerging upbeat that a bipartisan deal was within reach. "Significant progress," said Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine. Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., said they were "very close" to having a full proposal from the bipartisan group as soon as Tuesday.

One idea under consideration is reallocating money already approved as part of COVID-19 relief measures. Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, said Sunday that they're looking at repurposing more than \$100 billion from COVID-19 relief to help pay for infrastructure.

WASHINGTON (AP)—

The economy is growing at a healthy clip, and that has accelerated inflation, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell says in written testimony to be delivered Tuesday at a congressional oversight hearing.

Still, Powell reiterated his view that inflation's recent jump to a 13-year high would prove temporary.

"Inflation has increased notably in recent months," Powell said in the prepared remarks. He blamed the rise on several factors, including sharp price declines last year at the onset of the pandemic, which make inflation figures now, compared with a year ago, look much larger. Higher gas prices, and rapid increases in consumer spending as the economy reopens, coupled with supply bottlenecks, have also contributed to rising costs.

"As these transitory supply effects abate, inflation is expected to drop back toward our longer-run goal," Powell said, referring to the 2% inflation rate the Fed typically targets. Currently, however, the Fed is seek-

ing to push inflation slightly above 2% to make up for the roughly nine years that it has come in below that level.

Powell's remarks follow a meeting of the Fed's policymaking committee last week, when central bank officials signaled they now may increase the Fed's benchmark interest rate twice in 2023.

That's earlier than the time frame they set out in March, when no rate hike was expected until after 2023.

Powell also said the Fed had formally begun discussing when and how the central bank might reduce the current \$120 billion a month of Treasurys and mortgage-backed bonds that the Fed is purchasing each month.

Both moves were seen as evidence that the Fed wanted to signal it was prepared to keep inflation in check without initially taking any steps to pull back on its efforts to stimulate the economy.

Powell will testify Tuesday before a congressional oversight panel about the Fed's unprecedented steps last year to provide extraordinary support to financial markets at the out-

set of the pandemic, including the first purchases of corporate bonds in the Fed's history.

Separately, some Fed officials are also making it clear that they are ready to lift interest rates even earlier. On Friday, St. Louis Federal Reserve President James Bullard said he favored lifting rates in 2022.

That caused a sharp stock market sell-off. Higher interest rates generally make stocks less attractive to investors and make bonds a more appealing investment.

But on Monday, New York Federal Reserve Bank President John Williams, who also serves as vice chair of the Fed's policymaking committee, said that while the economy is rapidly improving, "conditions have not progressed enough for the (Fed) to shift its monetary policy stance of strong support for the economic recovery."

"I expect that as price reversals and short-run imbalances from the economy reopening play out, inflation will come down from around 3% this year to close to 2% next year and in 2023," Williams said.

U.S. stocks recovered most of their Friday losses on Monday.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

USVI oil refinery to shutter indefinitely amid violations

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—A huge oil refinery in the U.S. Virgin Islands that contaminated the environment in a series of events that sickened dozens of people and forced schools to close announced Monday that it would remain shuttered indefinitely. Limetree Bay Energy said it would lay off more than 270 workers by September because it faced "extreme financial constraints" after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency suspended its petroleum refining and processing operations last month. "This was an extremely difficult decision for us," CEO Jeff Rinker said in a statement. "Unfortunately, this is our only option." The EPA paused the company's operations last month as part of a 60-day emergency order after noting that Limetree had significant air pollutant and oil releases since February. The incidents, which the agency called "totally unacceptable," include exceeding the emissions limit of sulfur dioxide, which can harm a person's respiratory system. "Each had an immediate and significant health impact on people and their property," the EPA said.

Airlines, unions demand crackdown on unruly passengers

WASHINGTON (AP)—Airlines, flight attendants and pilots are calling for the U.S. Justice Department to prosecute unruly and violent passengers. In a letter to Attorney General Merrick Garland Monday, the trade group Airlines for America and unions for pilots and flight crew cited a "substantial increase in and growing escalation of passengers' unruly and disruptive behavior onboard aircraft, particularly toward crewmembers. These incidents pose a safety and security threat." In January, the Federal Aviation Administration announced a "zero-tolerance" policy toward passengers who

cause disturbances aboard aircraft or violate federal rules by refusing to follow flight crew instructions. Since then, the FAA has received more than 3,000 reports of unruly behavior and opened 465 investigations into assaults, threats of violence or interference with air crews. Many cases involved passengers who refused to wear masks aboard aircraft during the coronavirus pandemic. Through May, the FAA has sought some kind of enforcement action more than 400 times this year and pursued 57 civil penalties. So far, it has announced \$368,000 in fines on 21 passengers.

Supreme Court win for college athletes in compensation case

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court ruled unanimously Monday the NCAA can't limit education-related benefits—like computers and paid internships—that colleges can offer their sports stars, a victory for athletes that could help open the door to further easing in the decades-old fight over paying student-athletes. Schools recruiting top athletes could now offer tens of thousands of dollars in education-related benefits that also include study-abroad programs and graduate scholarships. However, the case doesn't decide whether students can simply be paid salaries for the benefits their efforts bring—measured in tens of millions for many universities. The high court agreed with a lower court's determination that NCAA limits on the education-related benefits that colleges can offer athletes who play Division I basketball and football violate antitrust laws. The case is important in the short term for students who may see schools competing for talent by sweetening their offers with a variety of education-related benefits. It's also important in the long term because it sets the stage for future challenges to NCAA rules limiting athletes' compensation.

Powell says in written testimony to be delivered Tuesday at a congressional oversight hearing.

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"As these transitory supply effects abate, inflation is expected to drop back toward our longer-run goal," Powell said, referring to the 2% inflation rate the Fed typically targets. Currently, however, the Fed is seek-

Biden White House launches public push for child tax credit



Vice President Kamala Harris visits a summer classroom at Brookline Memorial Recreation Center, Monday June 21, 2021, in Pittsburgh.

WASHINGTON (AP)—

The White House sought Monday to raise awareness of the federal government's new expanded child tax credit, which will start paying out monthly in July to families with children who are 17 years old and younger.

Vice President Kamala Harris spoke at a recreation center in Pittsburgh as part of a broader push to promote the program in partnership with churches, schools and other

organizations.

"When more families know about how they can get the relief, that is how we will be able to lift our children out of poverty," Harris said.

The administration has launched the website <https://childtaxcredit.gov> with details for potential recipients.

As part of President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package, eligible families can receive as much as \$3,600 for each child

under the age of 6. The tax credit will be \$3,000 annually per child between the ages of 6 and 17.

The payments are to be made monthly, a first for the program. People can register for the program even if they did not fully file their taxes.

The program is slated to expire after one year, though Biden has proposed extending it through 2025 with the ultimate goal of making it permanent.

Nation

Watchdog: Nursing home deaths up 32% in 2020 amid pandemic

WASHINGTON (AP)—Deaths among Medicare patients in nursing homes soared by 32% last year, with two devastating spikes eight months apart, a government watchdog reported Tuesday in the most comprehensive look yet at the ravages of COVID-19 among its most vulnerable victims.

The report from the inspector general of the Department of Health and Human Services found that about 4 in 10 Medicare recipients in nursing homes had or likely had COVID-19 in 2020, and that deaths overall jumped by 169,291 from the previous year, before the coronavirus appeared.

"We knew this was going to be bad, but I don't think even those of us who work in this area thought it was going to be this bad," said Harvard health policy professor David Grabowski, a nationally recognized expert on long-term care, who reviewed the report for The Associated Press.

US hits encouraging milestones on virus deaths and shots

COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have dipped below 300 a day for the first time since the early days of the disaster in March 2020, while the drive to put shots in arms hit another encouraging milestone Monday: 150 million Americans fully vaccinated.

The coronavirus was the third leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2020, behind heart disease and cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But now, as the outbreak loosens its grip, it has fallen down the list of the biggest killers.

CDC data suggests that more Americans are dying every day from accidents, chronic lower respiratory diseases, strokes or Alzheimer's disease than from COVID-19.

The U.S. death toll stands



AP
In this April 17, 2020, file photo, a patient is loaded into an ambulance by emergency medical workers outside Cobble Hill Health Center in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

"This was not individuals who were going to die anyway," Grabowski added. "We are talking about a really big number of excess deaths."

Investigators used a generally accepted method of estimating "excess" deaths in a group

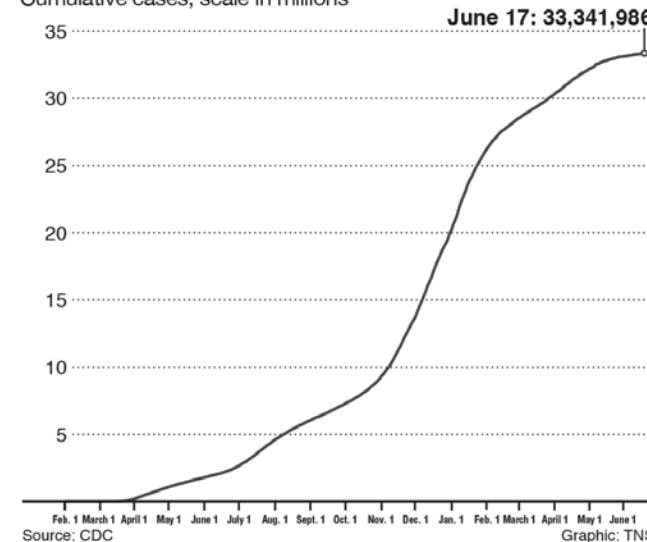
of people after a calamitous event. It did not involve examining individual death certificates of Medicare patients, but comparing overall deaths among those in nursing homes to levels recorded the previous year. The technique was used

to estimate deaths in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria in 2017 and in New York City after the first coronavirus surge last spring. It does not attribute a cause of death, but is seen as a barometer of impact.

Death rates were higher in

COVID-19 cases in the US

Cumulative cases, scale in millions



at more than 600,000, while the worldwide count is close to 3.9 million, though the real figures in both cases are be-

lieved to be markedly higher. About 45% of the U.S. population has been fully vaccinated, according to the CDC. Over

53% of Americans have received at least one dose of vaccine. But U.S. demand for shots has slumped, to the disappointment of public health experts.

Dr. Ana Diez Roux, dean of Drexel University's school of public health, said the dropping rates of infections and deaths are cause for celebration. But she cautioned that the virus still has a chance to spread and mutate given the low vaccination rates in some states, including Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Wyoming and Idaho.

"So far it looks like the vaccines we have are effective against the variants that are circulating," Diez Roux said. "But the more time the virus is jumping from person to person, the more time there is for variants to develop, and some of those could be more dangerous."

also was shot and killed. Authorities didn't immediately describe the circumstances of the shooting but said no one else is believed to have been involved. No identities have been released yet.

Earlier, police said there were two suspects.

The shooting occurred in Olde Town Arvada, the city's downtown district with shops, restaurants, breweries and other businesses. It's listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is about 7 miles (10 kilometers) northwest of downtown Denver.

It comes three months after a gunman opened fire and

killed 10 people, including a police officer, at a supermarket in Boulder, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) northwest of Arvada.

The Arvada officer's death, just the third in Police Department history, was especially painful after the mass shooting in nearby Boulder, Arvada Mayor Marc Williams said. Arvada police helped respond and investigate that attack, he said.

"This is by far the saddest day for our Police Department," Williams said.

The mayor said he was in his car in the area shortly before 2 p.m. "when literally I

saw 11 police cars with their flashing lights and sirens on race past me. I knew something serious had happened. I didn't know how serious."

Arvada resident Brady Turner said he was pulling into the Army and Navy store in the area when he noticed police cars driving in behind him and a person on a stretcher being put into an ambulance in between the parking lot and the store. He said he took off in his car.

"I just got out of there," Turner said.

About five minutes later, he heard gunshots near the library about a block away.

the report. "We really have to look at that. Why did they remain so vulnerable?" Federal investigators are still drilling down to try to document the chain of causes and effects.

Tuesday's report was the most comprehensive yet from the government because it included statistics for the early part of last year, during the initial coronavirus surge. Medicare did not require nursing homes to report COVID-19 cases and deaths occurring before May 8, more than four months into the pandemic year.

In another new finding, the report showed that cases and deaths among Asian American patients tracked with the more severe impacts seen among Blacks and Latinos. Indeed, Asian Medicare enrollees in nursing homes saw the highest increase in death rates, with 27% dying in 2020 compared to 17% the previous year. For whites, the death rate grew to 24% in 2020 from 18% in 2019, a significant increase but not as pronounced.

ACROSS THE NATION

Driver who rammed bicyclists in Arizona race has DUI history

PHOENIX (AP)—Authorities on Monday identified the man accused of plowing his pickup truck into a group of bicyclists taking part in a weekend race in an Arizona mountain town, critically injuring several riders, and court records show he has a criminal history of driving while intoxicated. Shawn Michael Chock, 35, fled the crash Saturday in Show Low, which is about a three-hour drive northeast of Phoenix, and was shot by police as they chased him, said Kristine Sleighter, a police spokeswoman. Chock, who lives in nearby White Mountain Lakes, is still hospitalized in stable condition, and authorities were trying to determine a motive for the crash. Prosecutors have been working with police investigators, but Navajo County Attorney Bradley Carlyon said his office typically does not charge hospitalized suspects until they are discharged. Online court records in Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix, show someone matching Chock's name and age has a history of arrests for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol and assault. In 2007, he was indicted on aggravated assault. Several months later, he was charged

with disorderly conduct with a weapon and pleaded guilty to a reduced charge.

Judge tosses most claims over clearing protesters in DC park

WASHINGTON (AP)—A federal judge has dismissed a majority of the claims filed by activists and civil liberties groups who accused the Trump administration of violating the civil rights of protesters who were forcefully removed by police using chemical agents from a park near the White House before then-President Donald Trump walked to a nearby church to take a photo. U.S. District Judge Dabney Friedrich said Monday the claims in the suit, which alleged that Trump and then-Attorney General William Barr had conspired to violate the rights of protesters last June, were speculative and it was premature for the court to conclude whether the actions of law enforcement officers were justified. Friedrich dismissed the claims against Barr and other federal officials, including the acting U.S. Park Police chief, Gregory Monahan, finding there wasn't sufficient evidence to prove there was any agreement or plan to violate the rights of the protesters. The judge also said the law gives them immunity in civil litigation.

Asia

Indonesia posts its largest one-day jump in COVID infections

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesian health authorities announced the country's largest one-day jump in new coronavirus infections on Monday, as the number of confirmed cases since the pandemic began crossed 2 million.

The Health Ministry reported 14,536 new infections and 294 deaths, bringing the country's total confirmed fatalities to more than 54,950. Both the total cases and total deaths are the most in Southeast Asia.

Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country, has seen infections surge in recent weeks, a climb that has been blamed on travel

during last month's Eid al-Fitr holiday as well as the arrival of new virus variants, such as the Delta version first found in India.

The surge is putting pressure on hospitals, including in Jakarta, where 80% of hospital beds are full, and has added urgency to the government's plan to inoculate 1 million people each day by next month. Authorities have so far only fully vaccinated 12.3 million of Indonesia's 270 million people and partially vaccinated another 10.9 million.

The World Health Organization last week said Indonesia's drastic increase in

hospital bed occupancy rates is a major concern and necessitates stricter public health and social measures, including large-scale social restrictions.

The government has resisted a large-scale lockdown due to fears of the economic impact. Offices, restaurants, shopping malls and places of worship remain open, though at 50% of their capacity.

"The situation is worrying," said Riris Andono Ahmad, an epidemiologist at Gajah Mada University. "We are facing a second wave of COVID-19 with the most transmissible variant and the public's low compliance with health protocols."

Suu Kyi: Testimony against me is wrong

BANGKOK (AP)—Lawyers for Myanmar's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, said Monday she told them some of the testimony against her was wrong in her trial on criminal charges that could send her to prison and end her political career.

In the trial, now in its second week, Suu Kyi is charged with illegally importing walkie-talkies for her bodyguards' use, unlicensed use of the radios, spreading information that could cause public alarm or unrest, and violating COVID-19 pandemic restrictions during the 2020 election campaign.

Critics of the ruling military junta say the case is meant to discredit her and legitimize its seizure of power. The charges in the trial are relatively minor, but if she is convicted could keep her from contesting a new election promised by the military within two years of its takeover.

Even if Suu Kyi is acquitted, there are two more serious charges against her that have yet to go to trial: violating a state secrets act, a hold-over from British colonial law that is punishable by up to 14 years' imprisonment, and accepting bribes, which

carries a maximum 15-year prison sentence.

Suu Kyi "listened with interest during the entire court hearing process and told us which testimony is wrong, which one should be cross-examined," one of her lawyers, Min Min Soe, said after Monday's court session in the capital, Naypyitaw. She did not cite any examples.

Another of her lawyers, Kyi Win, said Monday's testimony by police and a local official involved the charges of violating pandemic control regulations, and the unregistered import and use of the walkie-talkies.

Japan firms give vaccines to workers

TOKYO (AP)—Thousands of Japanese companies began distributing COVID-19 vaccines to workers and their families Monday in an employer-led drive reaching more than 13 million people that aims to rev up the nation's slow vaccine rollout.

Yuka Daimaru, among the Suntory workers getting the shot on a sprawling office floor, was visibly relieved after spending more than a year worrying about the coronavirus.

"I was nervous, but it didn't hurt as much as I thought it would," she said. "Now I don't have to worry as much on commuter trains or at meetings."

The Tokyo-based beverage maker plans to inoculate 51,500 people, including part-time workers and employees' families, with the Moderna vaccine.

About 3,500 companies have signed up for the free vaccines, and that number is

growing. The companies must present a plan to inoculate at least 1,000 people per site. But they decide whom to include, such as families, affiliate companies and suppliers.

Universities are also eligible. Smaller companies can apply through organizations, such as the local merchant association, so ideally no one falls through the cracks, according to the health ministry.

Among those taking part are major automaker Toyota Motor Corp., planning to vaccinate 80,000 people at its plants and offices.

Fast Retailing, behind the Uniqlo clothing chain, is inoculating 18,500 people, including part-timers and cleaning and cafeteria staff, starting July 1.

Online retailer Rakuten said it's vaccinating 60,000 workers and their families.

Company applications for the vaccines are accepted through February 2022.

Japan is relying totally on

imported vaccines for a campaign that started in February with medical professionals. Only about 6% of Japanese are fully vaccinated. Japan has had more than 14,000 deaths from COVID-19.

Vaccinations have been slowed by bungled reservation procedures, unclear distribution plans and shortages of medical staff to give shots.

Local governments and Japan's self-defense forces are also leading the vaccination campaign, but the employer-led efforts are helping accelerate the pace.

Daisuke Sen, a human resources senior general manager at Suntory Holdings, said the vaccinations at his company will be completed by the end of August.

The first day for the vaccinations came after weeks of work, especially scrambling to find doctors and nurses to carry out the shots, he said.

"Getting here means so much for me," he said.

World

Iran president-elect takes hard line and refuses to meet Biden

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)—Iran's president-elect staked out a hard-line position Monday in his first remarks since his landslide election victory, rejecting the possibility of meeting with President Joe Biden or negotiating Tehran's ballistic missile program and support of regional militias.

The comments by Ebrahim Raisi offered a blunt preview of how Iran might deal with the wider world in the next four years as it enters a new stage in negotiations to resurrect its now-tattered 2015 nuclear deal with global powers.

The news conference in Tehran also marked the first time the judiciary chief found himself confronted on live television about his role in the 1988 mass execution of political prisoners at the end of the Iran-Iraq war. Raisi offered no specific response to that dark chapter in Iran's history, but appeared confident and defiant as he described himself as a "defender of human rights."

they saw as tipped in Raisi's favor after a panel under Khamenei disqualified prominent reformist candidates and allies of relatively moderate President Hassan Rouhani. Tehran province had a staggeringly low 34% turnout, roughly half of previous years, with many polling stations noticeably deserted.

Behind a sea of microphones, mostly from media in Iran and countries home to Tehran-backed militias, Raisi took questions ranging from his views on the nuclear talks to relations with regional rival Saudi Arabia. He appeared nervous at the start of the hourlong session but grew increasingly at ease as he returned to vague campaign themes of promoting Iran's economic self-sufficiency and combating corruption.

The 60-year-old cleric, a protégé of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, swept nearly 62% of the 28.9 million votes in Friday's presidential election, which saw the lowest turnout in the Islamic Republic's history. Millions of Iranians stayed home in defiance of a vote

Concerning the talks over Iran's nuclear deal, Raisi promised to salvage the accord to secure relief from U.S. sanctions that have devastated the Iranian economy. But he ruled out any limits to Iran's missile capabilities and support for regional militias—among other issues viewed by Washington as shortcomings of the landmark deal that the Biden administration wants addressed.

"It's nonnegotiable," Raisi said of Iran's ballistic missile program, adding that the U.S. "is obliged to lift all oppressive sanctions against Iran."

Rainstorms bring relief as Europe suffers summer heat wave

BERLIN (AP)—Thunderstorms brought a much-needed cooldown to parts of Western Europe over the weekend as the continent sweltered under its first summer heat wave. Dozens of people were reported drowned as they sought relief from the heat.

Forecasters predicted further downpours Monday moving east toward Poland, which has seen five days of unusually hot weather.

Germany's national weather service DWD said temperatures in the west and north of the country dropped from over 30 degrees Celsius (86 Fahrenheit) over the weekend to about 20 C (68 F) after a night of heavy rain.

After days of soaring temperatures, France was lashed by violent thunderstorms that sent a belltower crashing into the nave of a village church in central France. The storm also tore through vineyards and flooded homes and public buildings.

Winds reached 137 kilometers per hour (85 mph) in Champagne country, felling trees and ripping off roofs. Huge hail stones damaged cars and homes in the east, and the French national weather service registered 44,000 lightning flashes on Saturday alone.

No deaths linked to the



A boy plays in a fountain at VDNKh (The Exhibition of Achievements of National Economy) in Moscow, Russia, Sunday, June 20, 2021.

storms have been reported but several countries reported drownings as people sought relief in pools, lakes and rivers.

At least 15 people drowned in Poland over the weekend, which was also the hottest so far this year with temperatures reaching 35 C (96 F).

Rescuers say the most frequent causes of drownings are recklessness, overestimating one's swimming abilities and going into the water after drinking alcohol.

Police in the Netherlands said two bodies were found in recent days at different locations in the Waal River, a branch of the Rhine. There was no immediate confirmation of their identities, but police in neighboring Germany said their descriptions matched those of two girls, aged 13 and 14, who went missing while swimming in the Rhine near Duisburg last week. A third teen was pulled out of the river Wednesday but couldn't be resuscitated.

In total, more than a dozen people have drowned in Germany over the past week.

Police in Austria said a 26-year-old man died Sunday after jumping from a 40-meter (131-foot) cliff at Wolfgangsee lake.

Moscow has also been hit with a heat wave this week, with temperatures spiking above 30 C (86 F) on Sunday. Russia's weather agency Rosgidromet warned that the unusually hot weather, with temperatures 7 C to 10 C higher than normal, is likely to persist in the Russian capital and the surrounding region through Friday.

Good Housekeeping

10

home renovations to make before you retire



Consider remodeling parts of your home to increase its value.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



By LAURA WOODS
GOBANKINGRATES.COM

Retirement is on the horizon, and you're thinking about relocating to another city. But before you sell your current house, you might want to consider remodeling parts of your home to increase its value.

1 GARAGE DOOR REPLACEMENT

If your garage door is notably banged up or glaringly outdated, consider having a new one installed as part of your home improvement initiative. Doing so can seriously increase the curb appeal of your residence, which will draw more buyers in.

A garage door replacement is a relatively inexpensive home renovation, with the national average price at just \$3,470. Expect it to boost your resale value by approximately \$3,411, which means you'll recoup 98 percent of the cost.

2 INSTALL MANUFACTURED STONE VENEER

If your home looks good from the outside, buyers will want to see the inside. Make the front exterior of your home the most luxurious on the block by having manufactured stone veneer installed on top of your existing siding.

Unlike many home improvement projects, you can expect to recoup around 97.1 percent of your costs. Budget the national average rate of \$8,221 for this upgrade, and expect it to increase your home's resale value by an estimated \$7,986.

3 DECK ADDITION

Buyers value a home with a nice outdoor space. Even if your local area only has a few warm months per year, chances are that whoever buys your home wants a deck to enjoy the pleasant weather while it lasts.

If your home doesn't have one, think about

adding a new deck to your home renovation list. The national average cost of a wooden deck addition is \$10,950, but you should recover roughly \$9,065, which is an 82.8 percent return on investment. If you opt for a composite deck addition, plan to spend around \$17,668 and increase your resale value by roughly \$11,239, providing a 63.6 percent return on your investment.

4 MINOR KITCHEN REMODEL

The kitchen is the most important room in the house in the mind of most buyers, according to real estate site Zillow. Consequently, if you can't remember the last time yours was upgraded, it should be a priority in your home renovations.

The national average cost of a mid-range minor kitchen remodel is \$21,198. It will add around \$17,193 to your resale value, so you'll recoup approximately 82.8 percent.

Since a kitchen remodel is often the most necessary but not the most lucrative home renovation, Zillow recommends focusing on the most eye-catching areas, including countertops, cabinets, appliances, outlets, backsplash and flooring. In some cases, a coat of paint or a little sandpaper might make a world of difference, so try to salvage what you have before investing in all new upgrades.

5 SIDING REPLACEMENT

The shape of the siding on your home is the very first impression most buyers will have. If it's in poor condition or an outdated color, potential buyers might assume the inside matches the outside and keep on driving without stopping for a tour.

The national average cost of a siding replacement is \$15,072. This home improvement project should add around \$11,554 worth of resale value, which is a 76.7 percent return on investment.

Choosing the right siding colors makes all

the difference, so Better Homes and Gardens recommends taking a number of factors into consideration, including the color scheme of your neighborhood and the architecture of your home. The magazine also suggests applying swatches of your favorite paint choices on different sides of your home and evaluating them at different times of day, so you can make an informed decision.

6 BATHROOM REMODEL

If your bathroom has a blue tub or pink tile lining the walls, updating it in a home renovation will increase the resale value of your home. The national average cost of a mid-range bathroom remodel is \$19,134, and it garners a return on investment of roughly \$13,422, which is 70.1 percent.

Because this home remodeling project is important but not necessarily the most profitable, handle it wisely. Repairing or replacing tile, floors and walls make a bathroom more appealing to buyers, according to home services site Angie's List. It also recommends adding a wow factor, such as a large glass shower enclosure, an attractive tile detail or a striking vanity.

7 ROOF REPLACEMENT

Most buyers aren't keen on purchasing a property and immediately having to sink even more cash into it. If your roof is nearing its expiration date, consider replacing it.

The national average cost of a roof replacement is \$20,939, and it adds approximately \$14,320 to your resale value, bringing your return on investment to 68.4 percent. Potential buyers might not immediately notice your home remodeling project, but a new roof could be a deciding factor for those very serious about making an offer.

8 BATHROOM ADDITION

Many older homes with multiple bedrooms were only built with one

bathroom. While this setup worked fine for your family, modern buyers aren't so keen on having one bathroom for the entire household.

If most homes in the same price range in your local area have multiple bathrooms, you will probably benefit from adding another. The national average cost of a mid-range bathroom addition is \$44,717. This home improvement project will increase the value of your home by an estimated \$26,769, providing a 59.9 percent return on investment.

9 MAJOR KITCHEN REMODEL

As noted earlier, the kitchen is a major focal point for buyers. If yours is in such bad shape that a minor kitchen remodel just won't cut it, you might want to spring for a major kitchen overhaul.

This type of home remodeling project would likely necessitate most — if not all — upgrades involved in a mid-range kitchen remodel plus something more involved, such as changing the entire layout of the room to a more functional, open setup.

The national average for a mid-range major kitchen overhaul is \$63,829. Expect to recoup about 59 percent of your investment, as it will add approximately \$37,637 to your resale value.

10 MASTER SUITE ADDITION

You've done just fine all these years without a master suite, but this feature is coveted by many modern buyers. If this home renovation makes sense to attract buyers in your local market, consider building out a new master bedroom suite that includes a private bath, walk-in closet and dressing area.

Budget the national average cost of approximately \$123,420 for a mid-range master suite, and expect it to boost your resale value by around \$69,807, representing a 56.6 percent return on your investment.

Life & Style

Angelina Jolie visits Burkina Faso as U.N. Special Envoy

GOUDOUBO, Burkina Faso (AP)—Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie has visited war-weakened Burkina Faso to show solidarity with people who continue to welcome the displaced, despite grappling with their own insecurity, and said the world isn't doing enough to help.

"The humanitarian crisis in the Sahel seems to me to be totally neglected. It is treated as being of little geopolitical importance," Jolie told the Associated Press. "There's a bias in the way we think about which countries and which people matter."

While Burkina Faso has been battling a five-year Islamic insurgency linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State that's killed thousands and displaced more than one million people, it is also hosting more than 22,000 refugees, the majority Malian.

Crowds gather at Stonehenge for solstice despite advice

LONDON (AP)—Dozens of people have ignored advice not to travel to Stonehenge for the annual summer solstice celebrations, which were cancelled Monday due to coronavirus concerns.

English Heritage, which looks after the Neolithic monument, had planned a live feed of the sunrise at Stonehenge for the second year in a row. But the organization said that program had to be interrupted because of safety concerns after "a number of people have chosen to disregard our request to not travel to the stones this morning."

Thousands of people who tuned in to watch the sunrise at the stones online ended up watching pre-recorded footage before the live feed returned around 5 a.m.

As Special Envoy to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Jolie marked World Refugee Day on Sunday in Burkina Faso's Goudoubo refugee camp in the Sahel, where she finished a two-day visit. She spoke with the camp's Malian refugees and internally displaced people in the nation's hard-hit Center-North and Sahel regions.

After 20 years of work with the U.N. refugee agency, Jolie told the AP the increasing displacement meant the world was on a "terrifying trajectory towards instability", and that governments had to do something about the conflicts driving the vast numbers of refugees.

"Compared to when I began working with UNHCR twenty years ago, it seems like governments have largely given



up on diplomacy ... countries which have the least are doing the most to support the refugees," she said.

"The truth is we are not doing half of what we could and should ... to enable refugees to return home, or to support host countries, like Burkina Faso, coping for years with a fraction of the humanitarian aid needed



People inside the stone circle during Summer Solstice at Stonehenge, where some people jumped over the fence to enter the stone-circle to watch the sun rise at dawn of the longest day of the year in the UK, in Amesbury, England, Monday June 21, 2021. AP

Video from Britain's PA news agency and elsewhere showed dozens of people gathering inside the stone circle, with some scaling a low fence

to climb inside the restricted area to reach the stones. Some were seen dancing and others held a banner that read "Standing for Stonehenge."

In this image taken from video, Special Envoy to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Angelie Jolie speaks at the Malian refugee camp in Goudebo, Burkina Faso, Sunday June 20, 2021, to mark World Refugee day on Sunday.

"to provide basic support and protection," Jolie said.

Malians began fleeing to Burkina Faso in 2012 after their lives were upended by

an Islamic insurgency, where it took a French-led military intervention to regain power in several major towns. The fighting has since spread across the border to Burkina Faso, creating the fastest growing displacement crisis in the world. Last month Burkina Faso experienced its deadliest attack in years, when gunmen killed at least 132 civilians in Solhan village in the Sahel's Yagha province, displacing thousands.

Spielberg's Amblin to make several films a year for Netflix

NEW YORK (AP)—Steven Spielberg, a filmmaker synonymous with big-screen enchantment, has set a new deal with Netflix in which his production company, Amblin Partners, will make multiple feature films per year for the streaming giant.

The partnership, one long courted by Ted Sarandos, Netflix chief content officer, is a major get for the company that, amid increasing competition, brings perhaps the most beloved film direc-

tor more officially into the streaming fold.

The deal announced Monday doesn't specifically include any movies to be directed by Spielberg. This December, he will release "West Side Story" theatrically with Disney's 20th Century Studios. Amblin has a separate deal with Universal Pictures for theatrical releases.

"At Amblin, storytelling will forever be at the center of everything we do, and from the minute Ted and I started

discussing a partnership, it was abundantly clear that we had an amazing opportunity to tell new stories together and reach audiences in new ways," Spielberg said in a statement. "This new avenue for our films, alongside the stories we continue to tell with our longtime family at Universal and our other partners, will be incredibly fulfilling for me personally since we get to embark on it together with Ted, and I can't wait to get started with him, Scott, and the entire Netflix team."

SAG Awards will return in February 2022 with 2-hour show

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Screen Actors Guild Awards are returning to a two-hour format for its 2022 edition, which will air the last weekend in February.

The SAG Awards adopted a one-hour, completely virtual format for this year's show, which saw "Trial of the Chicago 7" crowned the top film ensemble and television acting honors going to the casts of "The Crown" for drama and "Schitt's Creek" for comedy.

The show's Feb. 27 airdate originally belonged to the Oscars, which has pushed its 2022 ceremony back to March 27. The show, which honors the best performances in television and film, will air on TNT and TBS.

The SAG Awards are often a reliable Oscar harbinger, though this year "Nomadland" took home the best picture Academy Award. All SAG Awards film winners this year were actors of color, but

that feat was not repeated at the Oscars.

Hollywood's 2021 awards season was delayed, and upended, by the coronavirus pandemic. The 2022 season has already been shaken up by NBC's decision not to air the Golden Globe Awards in January due to that organization's response to an LA Times investigation that revealed among its findings that the Hollywood Foreign Press Association had no Black members.

Study explores memory benefits of nicotine

DEAR ABBY: My patients, like most Americans, believe memory loss is a normal part of aging. But memory loss is never normal. In fact, it can be a symptom of mild cognitive impairment (MCI), a precursor to Alzheimer's disease. Nearly 1 in 7 people age 65-plus have MCI, but there is no treatment -- yet.

I'm proud to lead the NIH-funded MIND (Memory Improvement Through Nicotine Dosing) Study, which is testing whether memory and functioning can be improved in people with mild memory loss using an unexpected, low-cost and naturally occurring ingredient -- nicotine.

I realize that because of its association with smoking, nicotine gets a bad rap. But the tar and thousands of other chemicals in cigarettes are what cause cancer, heart disease or respiratory illness -- not nicotine. If we could push Alzheimer's back, by even a few years, it would make so much difference for millions of American families.

The MIND Study is enrolling healthy nonsmokers over the age of 55 with mild memory loss. I hope your readers who are interested will call (toll-free) 1-866-MIND-150 or visit MIND-Study.org to receive more information.

PAUL NEWHOUSE, M.D.,
Project Director, Vanderbilt University
School of Medicine

DEAR DR. NEWHOUSE: I hope so, too, and that they will be intrigued enough to join your study. I know that your study is valid and wish you—and the readers who choose to participate—the best of luck.

DEAR ABBY: I had several rough years in my marriage. We finally hit a good patch and had sex again. I told my husband to keep our sex life between ourselves and not discuss it with his family. Well, three days later, my daughter overheard him on the phone with a family member, explicitly discussing the intimate details of our encounter.

Unfortunately, she was unable to get to the door to close it and heard things that shocked her. Although she's in her 20s, what he was saying about our relationship should not have been heard. She told me what was said, but not all of the details, thank goodness. When I confronted my husband, he denied it! I approached him twice more, and he pretended he didn't know what I was talking about. Then he mumbled, "Don't worry about it."

He never admits he is wrong and thinks he should be able to discuss our sex life openly despite my strong disapproval. Our kids still live at home at 24 and 26. I am disgusted, hurt beyond forgiveness and strongly contemplating leaving him. Should I?

OLD-FASHIONED WIFE

DEAR ABBY
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR WIFE: Your husband had no right to invite his family into your marriage bed. Talking about your sex lives with the "children" (adult or not) is inappropriate unless they are as "liberated" as he is. He seems not only to lack boundaries but also to have a problem telling the truth. Because you are rightly embarrassed, draw the line. Tell him that unless he consents to accompany you to couples counseling, you are packing your bags. Do not say this, however, unless you mean it.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

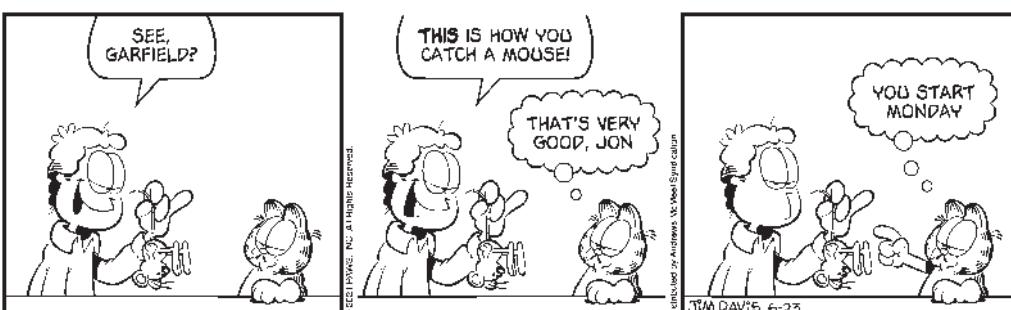
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Watterson

Garfield®



By Jim Davis

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



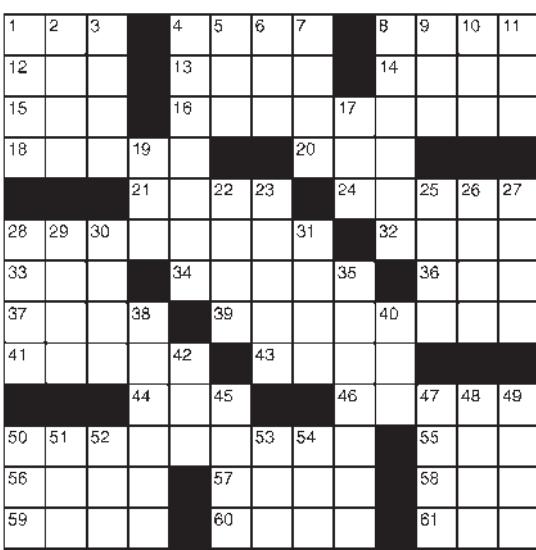
By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	39	Beatles	60	Contain	17	Buddy
1 New England cape	drummer	61	Tolkien creature	19 '60s Atty. General	22	Randy Jackson, 65.
4 Dutch cheese	before Ringo Starr	22	Robert of "I Spy"	23	Go in	
8 Urban haze	41 Google rival	1	Clock radio	25	Robust	
12 'The Simpsons' bartender	43 Hindu royal	2	Inquisitive toggle	26	Love god	
13 Actor Jared	44 Mojito ingredient	3	Close	27	Take five	
14 Greek vowel	46 Moral principle	4	"Wicked"	28	Feel sorry for	
15 Unpaid TV spot	50 Cake-decorating need	5	witch	29	Draft status	
16 Florida resort town	55 "Rocks"	6	Narc's org.	30	Impetuous	
18 Gift of the Magi	56 Puerto —	7	Part of NATO	31	— good example	
20 Soon-to-be grads	57 Scrabble piece	8	May honorees	35	Broke a promise	
21 Confront	58 Part of some	9	Nap	38	Literary elephant	
24 Different	10 Non-Rx German names	10	Bygone bird	40	Speck	
28 Dim sum offerings	11 "How frustrating!"	11	Non-Rx pronoun	42	Couple's legend	
32 Swiss river	59 Ireland	12	frustrating!"	45	Legend Bee's home	
33 Garten of the Food Network	Solution time: 23 mins.	13	Part of some	47	PC picture	
34 Modify	PEEL CAB	14	German names	48	Penny	
36 — Angeles	CODA ERITE CSU	15	10 Non-Rx	50	Season opener?	
37 New Age pianist John	COSMETICS S-D	16	German names	51	Vacuum's lack	
	IRAN SEMIS	17	11 "How frustrating!"	52	Chem., for one	
	PECAN POLO	18	frustrating!"	53	Life story	
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		59	11 "How frustrating!"			
		60	frustrating!"			

Yesterday's answer 6-23



For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Melissa Rauch, 41; Jason Mraz, 44; Frances McDormand, 64; Randy Jackson, 65.

Happy Birthday: Set financial, physical and emotional limits to protect against excess. Have a goal in mind and a reasonable time frame designated to finish what you start. Success is dependent on preparation, organization and living within your means. Use your intelligence wisely, and don't overextend yourself in any way, shape or form. Know your capabilities and skills; you will excel. Your numbers are 9, 16, 23, 25, 31, 36, 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Pursue something you enjoy doing. The time and energy required to fulfill your dream will put you in a leadership position. Do the best you can; you will make a difference. Educational pursuits will pay off.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Put your heart into your responsibilities. What you accomplish will make others take note of what you can do. Strive to advance, and you will wiggle your way into a better position. Leave nothing to chance, and you will excel.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Share your thoughts openly and compassionately. Change begins with an idea and being able to convince others to see things your way. Use your charm to attract attention and honesty to maintain credibility. Discipline and hard work will pave the way to success.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Look for a unique way to get things completed within budget and on time. A change may be

frustrating at first, but you will overcome any minor setback you face if you are diligent. Put in the energy, and you will prosper.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Look at all sides of a situation, and follow your heart. Don't let anyone talk you into something indulgent. Channel your energy into something tangible, and you will find a path that helps you excel and achieve a sense of accomplishment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A pragmatic approach to an emotional situation will help you navigate your way to a solution. A unique offer will intrigue you. Put nurturing your relationship with someone you enjoy collaborating with high on your list. Romance is on the rise.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Learn as you go; you will accomplish all that you set out to do. Discipline and an ambitious approach to life, learning and personal growth will take you down a path that is engaging and full of exciting twists and turns.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Remain calm and in control, regardless of what others do or say. Stick to the truth, consider what you enjoy doing most and concentrate on exploring the possibilities available to you. A change may be overdue, but it requires forethought.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Be open and honest about how you feel, and you will find your way. Expand your relationships with people who share your concerns and are heading in a similar direction. Change your surroundings to suit your lifestyle.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): It's OK to do things differently. Focus on home, family and setting up your house to add to your comfort and convenience. Strive to reach your goal and to stabilize meaningful relationships. Love and romance are in your best interest.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't make promises you cannot keep or offer for a false impression regarding the way you feel. An intelligent explanation will help you sway the opinion of someone who can help you reach your goal. Put your energy where it counts most.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Head in a direction that makes you stretch your imagination. Strive to discover what you can do, keep an open mind and have the ability to walk away from anything or anyone that isn't in your best interest.

Birthday Baby: You are playful, creative and insightful. You are studious and disciplined.

•: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes.

•: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others.

•: Focus and you'll reach your goals.

•: Aim high; start new projects.

•: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

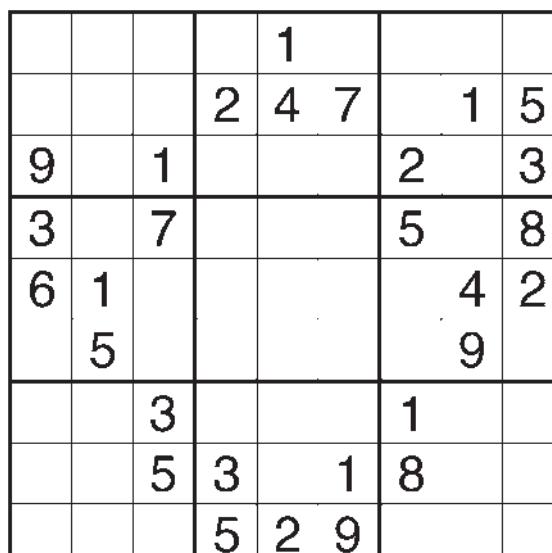
COURTESY 2007
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

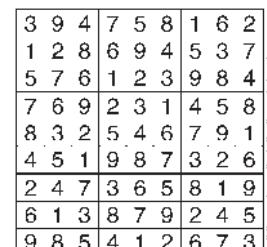
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★

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Yesterday's Answer



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By DAVID OUELLET

WONDERWORD

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

FAMOUS ASTEROIDS

A I L A S S A M I T O I D D C
D U A R U A L E R T S A A O A
I A R M A R A F A S M V P N M
V I F O R T U N A P I P H N I
A L A N R H D M H D E S N E L
D I R I S A A I W U L Y E R L
I H O C Y R T E N A E C R A A
M P H A G R I N A T B H O H M
U S T R I L E A U S Y E S A L
S I E T L B E M S E C A E G A
Y T E A G I G E I V L L E A P
L E I C E R E S K L I Y A R U
V M A L U S R U A L J U N O M
I D O R I S I P A A N I R A M
A S O N J A A G R E B M A B A

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6/23

Alauda, Alerts, Amphitrite, Aurora, Bergama, Bennu, Camilla, Ceres, Cybele, Daphne, Davida, Davidewilla, Diotima, Donnera, Doris, Egeria, Elyna, Eros, Fortuna, Galilea, Hagar, Iris, Juno, Latura, Margret, Marina, Massalia, Metis, Monica, Names, Nausikaa, Pallas, Palma, Philia, Psyche, Pumma, Safara, Sonja, Sumida, Sylvia, Thora, Ursula, Vesta
Yesterday's Answer: Neapolitan

Treasures 22 through 43 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

DeGrom dominates after arm scares, Mets and Braves split DH

 NEW YORK (AP)—Jacob deGrom put Mets fans at ease with a bevy of triple-digit heaters.

Hopefully clear of the arm woes that interrupted his past two starts, the two-time NL Cy Young Award winner is back to dominating hitters — and the record books.

DeGrom shouldered the load for New York in his return from another injury scare, pitching one-hit ball over five scoreless innings as the Mets beat the Atlanta Braves 4-2 Monday to open a doubleheader.

Braves closer Will Smith loaded the bases in the nightcap's seventh inning but escaped for his 14th save in a 1-0 win. Ronald Acuña Jr. hit his 20th homer, and Ian Anderson became the first native New Yorker to beat the Mets and Yankees in New York in the same season.

DeGrom didn't allow a hit in the seven-inning opener until Mets outfielders misplayed a fly ball with two outs in the fifth, letting it fall for a ground-rule double. DeGrom threw 70 pitches, 15 of them over 100 mph, with two walks and six strikeouts.

"Felt good," deGrom said. "I think that's why we decided at that 70-pitch mark to say that was enough, didn't want to overdo it."

Jeff McNeil came off the injured list and singled as a pinch-hitter for deGrom (7-2) during New York's three-run fifth inning. He scored on Dominic Smith's three-run double.

Ozzie Albies hit a two-run homer off Seth Lugo in Game 1 for the Braves, who had won three of four but were playing their second doubleheader in two days — they also split that one, winning the nightcap against St. Louis 1-0 on a homer by Acuña.

Left-hander Kyle Muller (0-1) pitched one-hit ball over four innings in the opener, leaving with a 1-0 deficit in his first big league start.

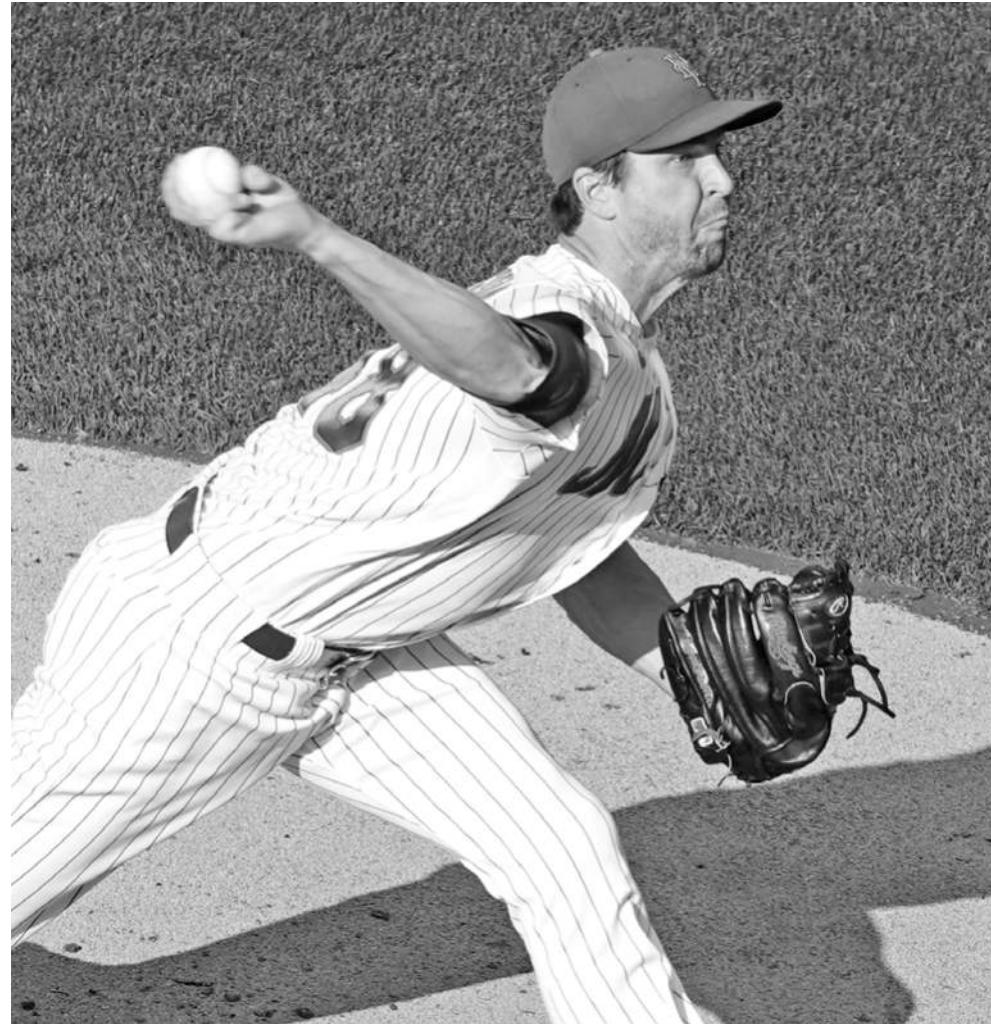
"He threw the ball extremely well," Atlanta manager Brian Snitker said. "Had a good breaking ball, kept his composure, everything was really good."

Mets closer Edwin Díaz finished a two-hitter in Game 1, pitching the seventh for his 15th save in 16 chances.

Mets sparkplug Jonathan Villar left the second game with right calf tightness after leading off the sixth with a double, one of several health-related setbacks for New York. Villar will be re-evaluated Tuesday.

DeGrom has thrown 30 consecutive scoreless innings, 2 2/3 shy of R.A. Dickey's franchise mark set in 2012.

He topped Hall of Famer Bob Gibson's record with his 12th consecutive start allow-



AP
New York Mets starting pitcher Jacob deGrom winds up during the second inning of a baseball game against the Atlanta Braves, Monday, June 21, 2021, in New York.

Rangers 8, Athletics 3

In Arlington, Texas, Andy Ibañez and Jose Trevino hit three-run homers, Kyle Gibson (5-0) allowed two runs and five over 5 1/3 innings and Texas ended a six-game losing streak.

A's shortstop Elvis Andrus went 0 for 4 in his return to Texas, which traded him to Oakland just before spring training.

Ibañez hit his first major league homer as part of a five-run first against Frankie Montas (7-7). Trevino went deep in the sixth for an 8-2 lead.

Indians 4, Cubs 0

In Chicago, Bobby Bradley and Josh Naylor homered, helping the Cleveland Indians overcome the loss of Aaron Civale, who exited with two outs in the fifth because of a right middle finger injury. The right-hander leads the major leagues with 10 wins.

Bryan Shaw (2-2) got four outs as Cleveland moved within two games of the idle White Sox for the top spot in the AL Central.

Chicago lost for the sixth time in eight games. Javier Baez was pulled by manager David Ross after he apparently lost track of outs and was doubled up off second base on Anthony Rizzo's fourth-inning flyout.

Adbert Alzolay (4-6) permitted three runs over 4 2/3 innings in his return from the 10-day injured list after being

ing no more than one run. His 0.50 ERA is the lowest by a pitcher through 12 starts in major league history. Opponents are hitting .113 against him, the lowest average against any pitcher in a 12-game span since at least 1901, with a minimum 70 innings.

Two days after his 33rd birthday, deGrom came out firing in his first start since his previous two outings were cut short by arm trouble. The right-hander was pulled after three perfect innings against the Cubs last Wednesday with shoulder soreness, and he left the outing prior to that June 11 against San Diego with flexor tendinitis in his right arm.

DeGrom has thrown 154 pitches at least 100 mph this season, most in baseball among starting pitchers—Tampa Bay's Shane McClanahan was second entering Monday with 14.

"He's on another level," Snitker said.

In the second game, Jerad Eickhoff gave New York four scoreless innings in his first big league appearance since June 16, 2019 with Philadelphia, but Miguel Castro (2-2) allowed Acuña's leadoff shot in the fifth.

Anderson (5-3) pitched 5 1/3 scoreless innings, striking out five. Raised in Clifton Park, the right-hander became the first native of the state to beat two New York teams in the Big Apple in a season since Philadelphia's Jim Konstanty and Chicago's Turk Lown both defeated the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants in 1953.

"It's always nice to come home and pitch, and I've had some good success doing it," Anderson said.

Smith allowed two hits and a walk with one out in the seventh. Braves third baseman Austin Riley—who made two diving stops in the opener — nearly ended the late game when he dived to catch Kevin Pillar's liner. Riley sprawled to touch third as Pete Alonso retreated to tag up. Umpires called Alonso out, but that ruling was overturned via replay review.

Brandon Drury popped up to second base for the final out.

The Mets have 13 runs in their last seven games. They threatened in the sixth but Jose Peraza and Francisco Lindor each got thrown out carelessly on the bases.

Padres 6, Dodgers 2

In San Diego, Yu Darvish struck out 11 in six innings to become the fastest big leaguer to reach 1,500 for his career, Manny Machado and Jake Cronenworth homered and San Diego beat Los Angeles.

Darvish (7-2) reached 1,500 strikeouts on the nose in 197 starts. He held the Dodgers to two hits, including Mookie Betts' solo homer, and walked just one.

The Padres improved to 5-3 this season against the Dodgers.

Darvish notched his milestone 1,500th strikeout when he got Steven Souza Jr. looking leading off the sixth.

Will Smith homered off San Diego reliever Craig Stammen in the eighth, his ninth. Julio Urías (9-3) took the loss.

Diamondbacks 5, Brewers 1

In Phoenix, Merrill Kelly pitched seven effective in-

nings, Ketel Marte had two hits and Arizona snapped a 17-game losing streak by beating Milwaukee.

The win was a long time coming for Arizona, which earned its first win since beating the Mets 6-5 in 10 innings on June. The 17-game skid was two shy of the longest during the wild-card era, by the Kansas City Royals in 2005.

Kelly (3-7) needed just 94 pitches to navigate his seven innings, giving up one run, five hits and a walk with five strikeouts.

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Jacob deGrom was stopped coming off the mound after retiring the side in order in the first inning, and chuckled as he handed his glove and cap over to the umpire. The New York Mets ace then undid his belt buckle as requested, showing there was no goop there either.

This was no sticky situation for the two-time National League Cy Young Award winner, only what is going to become a new norm for all professional pitchers.

The search is on for unauthorized foreign substances that pitchers can use to doctor baseballs, long against the rules but rarely enforced until now. The crackdown began Monday when major and minor league umpires started regular checks of all pitchers for tacky substances used to get a better grip on the balls, but can also increase the spin of the balls and make hitting

them more difficult.

"I said, 'What all do you guys need?' 'Glove, hat and belt,' they said. I handed them that stuff and then went along my way," said deGrom, the first to get inspected since he was the first pitcher to take the mound on the day baseball's new enforcement directive went into effect. He started the first game of New York's home doubleheader against Atlanta.

The Mets and Braves were among 14 Major League Baseball teams who played Monday, six days after a five-page memo to teams about the pending change in enforcement that followed what baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred called an extensive process of repeated warnings without effect.

"I think I've seen everything in baseball, but this is new, setting a new precedent," said Houston Astros manager Dusty Baker, in his

sidelined by a blister on his right middle finger.

Astros 10, Orioles 2

In Baltimore, Jake Odorizzi and the Houston bullpen took a bid for a combined no-hitter into the eighth inning, eventually settling for a win over Baltimore that extended their winning streak to eight games.

Maikel Franco hit a two-run homer with one out in the eighth off Brandon Bielak, breaking up the no-hitter. Odorizzi and reliever Cristian Javier held the Orioles without a hit through seven.

Odorizzi (2-3) struck out nine and threw 86 pitches, three shy of his season high.

Yordan Alvarez hit a three-run homer in Houston's five-run third inning. Keegan Akin (0-3) allowed five runs in four-plus innings.

Twins 7, Reds 5, 12 innings

In Minneapolis, Miguel Sanó hit a two-run homer in the 12th inning to lift Minnesota past Cincinnati, the fifth straight victory for the Twins and fifth loss in a row for the Reds.

With a five-man infield and a runner on third, Sanó hammered a 3-1 slider from Heath Hembree (1-3) over the wall in left-center.

Matt Shoemaker (3-8) pitched two hitless innings for the win. Shoemaker loaded the bases in the 12th after two walks, one intentional, but struck out Eugenio Suárez—who had a homer and three RBIs—to escape.

Luis Arraez had two RBIs for the Twins, who lost star center fielder Byron Buxton to another injury.

MLB umpires start checking pitchers

ARLINGTON, Texas

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sidelined by a blister on his right middle finger.

Asked whether such substances were tacitly allowed in the past, Baker responded, "You just didn't really make a fuss about it, but it was against the rules, so we'll see."

Rangers starter Kyle Gibson and Oakland's Frankie Montas weren't checked until after pitching in the second inning in Texas. Both were smiling after getting inspected on the field, and then getting a tap on the chest from plate umpire Dan Iassogna. They got checked again three innings later.

Texas manager Chris Woodward said before the game that Gibson said he has never used anything on baseball.

"He's kind of a unicorn nowadays ... to have a guy who is so good who doesn't use anything," Woodward said. "It's probably rare."

Ben Simmons' future uncertain after playoff flop



PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Ben Simmons backed his way to the basket, spun around Danilo Gallinari for the easy look at the net—an uncontested layup, a dunk—and he passed. Passed the ball. Passed on the shot. Passed on the chance to tie the game.

Joel Embiid threw up his hands in disbelief. With a chance to tie Game 7 against Atlanta late in the fourth quarter, Simmons surrendered the chance to play postseason hero and fed the ball to Matisse Thybulle.

"I just assumed Gallo was coming over my back," Simmons said.

Simmons thought Gallinari would try to foul him—much as the Hawks did throughout the seven-game series victory to reach the Eastern Conference finals—and going to the line in the clutch was a risk the All-Star guard was not willing to take.

His free-throw shooting was the poison in the postseason that ultimately knocked out the top-seeded Sixers. Simmons shot 25-for-73 (34%) from the line in the playoffs and missed 27 alone against the Hawks.

Unacceptable numbers for any player, much less a former No. 1 draft pick with more than \$140 million left on his contract. He can't shoot 3s (5-for-34 career), his free throws failed him and now Simmons is afraid to dunk. Coach Doc Rivers went from Simmons' most ardent supporter early in the playoffs to openly wondering about the guard's fate in Philly.

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court ruled unanimously Monday the NCAA can't limit education-related benefits—like computers and paid internships—that colleges can offer their sports stars, a victory for athletes that could help open the door to further easing in the decades-old fight over paying student-athletes.

Schools recruiting top athletes could now offer tens of thousands of dollars in education-related benefits that also include study-abroad programs and graduate scholarships. However, the case doesn't decide whether students can simply be paid salaries for the benefits their efforts bring—measured in tens of millions for many universities.

The high court agreed with a lower court's determination that NCAA limits on the education-related benefits that colleges can offer athletes who play Division I basketball and football violate antitrust laws. The case is important in the



Philadelphia 76ers' Ben Simmons wipes his face during the second half of Game 5 in a second-round NBA basketball playoff series against the Atlanta Hawks, Wednesday, June 16, 2021, in Philadelphia. AP

for his miserable play. Simmons said his free-throw woes were more mental than physical. At 24, Simmons seemed aware that a complete overhaul of his game may not happen in Philly—or anywhere.

"I am who I am. It is what it is," Simmons said. "The first thing I'm going to do is clear my mind and get my mental (health) right."

Green said it was a mistake that "people think Ben doesn't care."

"You can see in his play that he cares," Green said. "I think he might be a little afraid of certain things. But I think because of how his interviews go, he doesn't show much emotions. Believe it or not, he cares."

Simmons wouldn't be the first No. 1 pick sent out of Philly because of potential issues of the mind rather than mechanics. Markelle Fultz, the No. 1 pick of the 2017 draft, had his rookie season slowed by mental issues that resulted in a broken shot and an eventual trade to Orlando.

Simmons was an NBA All-Defensive first team selection and his size and strength should make him attractive to some team willing to take a flyer on a project with potential.

It's hard to see how that works next season in Philly.

take action himself, he said.

Emmert told The Associated Press on Monday that the high court's ruling makes going about the NIL reforms "more complicated" but "doesn't mean we can't and we shouldn't."

An NCAA governing body with the power to adopt changes is scheduled to meet this week. Meanwhile, six state laws that allow athletes to receive names-and-images compensation will go into effect July 1. The NCAA has asked Congress for help in the form of a federal law, but lawmakers are nowhere near passing legislation.

The players associations of the NFL, the NBA and the WNBA had all urged the justices to side with the ex-athletes, as did the Biden administration.

White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Monday of the athletes: The "decision recognizes that, as with all Americans, their hard work should not be exploited."

Simmons lost his shot, his confidence, and potentially his job in Philadelphia.

Rivers wasn't ready to rule out the return of the maligned guard if he's ready to put in offseason work.

"I'm very bullish on Ben, still," Rivers said Monday. "But there's work. Ben will be

willing to do it and that's the key. Sometimes you have to go through stuff to see it and be honest with it. Obviously, what Ben just went through, I can't

imagine that because he has so much greatness around him and all the things that he does."

His flashes of greatness—he is a three-time All-Star—are fleeting in the postseason.

Simmons did not attempt a shot in the fourth quarter in Game 2. He did the same in

Games 4 through 7—0-for-0 in the final period. Not one single shot in the fourth over five playoff games.

"There's areas he can fix quickly, in my opinion, that will take him to another level," Rivers said. "I look at this as a great challenge but definitely a doable one."

Sixers guard Danny Green said Monday it was unfair that "everyone wants the narrative it's all Ben's fault."

"It's not just Ben. We all together win or lose," Green said. "He's a mentally tough kid, usually. We don't know what was going on. It happens with players. Ben has gone through quite a bit this year and it's not his fault that we lost."

Simmons' missed dunk opportunity that would have

made it 88-all with 3:29 left gnawed at Embiid. Thybulle was fouled on the play and made 1 of 2.

"I'll be honest. I thought the turning point was when we, I don't know how to say it, but I thought the turning point was just we had an open shot and we made one free throw," Embiid said. "We missed the other and then they came down and scored. We didn't get a good possession on the other end and Trae (Young) came back and made a 3."

Embiid also blamed himself for a later turnover, but the MVP runner-up gamely carried the Sixers through the postseason while playing with a torn meniscus in his right knee.

Simmons had long been

publicly coddled by former coach Brett Brown and Rivers—who went so far as to chide a reporter for asking why Simmons was playing in late-game situations—until his failures in the fourth ultimately sent him to the bench.

Simmons said "I love being in Philly" but the vitriolic reaction in the hours after the loss proved it doesn't love him back.

"Offensively I wasn't there," he said. "I didn't do enough for my teammates. There's a lot of things I need to work on."

Shaquille O'Neal said on TNT, "If he was in my locker room, I would have knocked his (butt) out."

Shaq's broader point was that it was about time Simmons stopped making excuses

Supreme Court win for college athletes in compensation case

short term for students who may see schools competing for talent by sweetening their offers with a variety of education-related benefits. It's also important in the long term because it sets the stage for future challenges to NCAA rules limiting athletes' compensation.

Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote for the court that the NCAA sought "immunity from the normal operation of the antitrust laws," an argument the court rejected. Gorsuch said that allowing colleges and universities to offer "enhanced education-related benefits ... may encourage scholastic achievement and allow student-athletes a measure of compensation more consistent with the value they bring to their schools."

Under current NCAA rules, students cannot be paid, and the scholarship money a college can offer is capped at the cost of attending the school.

The NCAA had defended its rules as necessary to preserve

the amateur nature of college sports, preventing a blurring of the line between them and professional teams, with colleges trying to lure talented athletes by offering over-the-top benefits. A lower court had upheld the NCAA limits on scholarships and cash awards, and the high court wasn't asked to weigh in on those.

Writing for only himself, Justice Brett Kavanaugh signaled where Monday's decision may lead. He said there are "serious questions" about whether the NCAA's other restrictions on compensating athletes can stand. Kavanaugh wrote that "traditions alone cannot justify the NCAA's decision to build a massive money-raising enterprise on the backs of student athletes who are not fairly compensated."

"Nowhere else in America can businesses get away with agreeing not to pay their work-

ers a fair market rate on the theory that their product is defined by not paying their workers a fair market rate. ... The NCAA is not above the law," wrote Kavanaugh, who as a college student played on Yale's junior varsity basketball team.

The case was brought by former athletes, including West Virginia football player Shawne

Aiston. It followed a separate, earlier lawsuit brought by athletes including former UCLA basketball player Ed O'Bannon and NBA legends Oscar Robertson and Bill Russell where an appeals court concluded NCAA rules aren't exempt from antitrust law. That case ended with the Supreme Court declining to weigh in.

As a result of Monday's ruling, the NCAA itself can't bar schools from offering Division I basketball and football players additional education-related benefits. But individual

athletic conferences can still set limits if they choose.

"It is our hope that this victory in the battle for college athletes' rights will carry on a wave of justice uplifting further aspects of athlete compensation," said Steve Berman, an attorney for the former college athletes, in a statement following the ruling.

"This is the fair treatment college athletes deserve."

The court's ruling comes at a time when the NCAA has already been debating how to amend its rules to allow college athletes to profit from their names, images and likenesses, often abbreviated NIL. That would allow athletes to earn money for sponsorship deals, online endorsement and personal appearances.

NCAA President Mark Emmert last week urged member schools to pass a long-stagnant names-and-images reform proposal before the end of the month. If they don't, he will



Shirley's Galvez: Happy and proud moment

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For team captain Andreu Galvez, Shirley's Badminton Club winning the 2021 TanHoldings Badminton Team Tournament was a happy and proud moment since it's the first time many of his teammates have ever taken part in a Northern Marianas Badminton Association tournament.

"We were so happy and excited to each receive a gold medal from the NMBA board and tournament committee. It was a happy and proud moment because we have players that just got a taste of their first ever NMBA team tournament and it is an accomplishment for them that they will remember for a long time especially it comes with the desire to look forward for more major events," he said.

Galvez and company received their championship medals during the 2021 TanHoldings Badminton Team Tournament awards ceremony last Friday at the Gillette Multi-Purpose Gymnasium

Joining Galvez in the podium were Shirley's teammates Lance Gallardo, Walker Wang, Jerry Tan, Leonard Manuel, Windy Fernandez, Loida Ito,



Rowena Shouck, Irish Pagaraao, Roxe Lazaro, Jadel Ignacio, Gladys Dacumos, Joseph King, Jerome Malsarte, and Perry Lei.

Galvez made special mention of Lei, Wang, and Gallardo's contributions to their victory. "Lei never gives up on a play. Wang is not only a skilled player but more importantly a team player and supporter, while Gallardo gave us a lot of great plays."

He also praised new players who got their first taste of a major NMBA tournament. "Gladys Dacumos, Jadel Ignacio, Leonard Manuel, and

Joseph King all displayed outstanding performances, shown a lot of team love and support, and a lot of potential growth in the sport."

Jannelle Pangilinan, 2021 TanHoldings Badminton Team Tournament director, thanked tournament sponsor TanHoldings for bankrolling the team tournament and everyone who made the two-day competition a success.

"This tournament was my first in being part of the tournament committee. It was an honor on getting involved with the sport I love. Thank you also

to TanHoldings for a successful tournament. It brought back many players and new players as well. Also to my teammates (national team) for helping me to make this happen," she said.

Galvez, who like Pangilinan is also a director of NMBA,

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Shirley's Badminton Club players proudly show off their championship medal after awards ceremony of the 2021 TanHoldings Badminton Team Tournament held last Friday at the TSL Sports Complex.

said everyone not only members of Shirley's were winners for having taking part in the tournament after a year of no competition due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This also goes to the other team players who are new or experienced this tournament as their first ever major tournament from NMBA. I think all participants showed tremendous performances as everyone was excited after over a year long absence of major NMBA tournaments due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

NMBA president Merlie To-

lentino was extremely pleased that the federation was finally able to organize a tournament following the uncertainties of the past year.

"NMBA is pleased with the turnout—73 players and five team—for our first tournament of the 2021 season and also our first competition since we suspended badminton activities in March last year. NMBA is happy that despite the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, our federation was able to bring back our regular members to the court and also encourage new players to try the sport," she said.

Shirley's finished on top of the heap with 50 total points, followed by Golden Racquet Badminton Club (37 points), Taga Badminton Club (35 points), United Badminton Club (29 points), and Community Badminton Club (28 points).

3x3 Season 2, slam dunk exhibition this weekend

The Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation will be hosting 3x3 Season 2, which includes a slam dunk exhibition, this weekend at the Agape Gymnasium and the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The two-day tournament already has 33 teams signed up divided into three division—5-16 boys, 5-open women's, and 23-open men's, according to coordinator Clint Albert.

"Coach Elias [Rangamar] and I, since the start were really planning to run a 3x3 tournament every year. But due to various reasons out of our control we had to push season 2's date longer than expected. After the Kings of The Game (1-on-1 tournament) we definitely had to kick this off as somewhat of a preseason tournament for the semi-pro league which we aim to do season 2 on the last quarter of



the year," he said.

Albert said NMIBF holding 3x3 Season 2 is also a testament to the growing popularity of 3x3 basketball.

"I would say 3x3's popularity was really the great work of FIBA and its program. But I also believe due to the pan-

demic before the world was seeing full court tournaments, people were running 3x3s to have a smaller number of people playing in the same venue and thus being a safer bet in causing spread of the virus. To add to this 3x3 is a fast paced and a very exciting tournament format which a lot of fans also enjoy watching," he said.

On the slam dunk exhibition, so far high-leapers Coby Santos, Eric Joe, and Mak Mintac have committed to taking part in the sideshow, which will utilize a 9-foot rim instead of the standard 10-foot rim.

"These dunkers will try to wow the crowd and will also be wearing special jerseys that are inspired by Dunk Legends care of The Game Athletics. We wanted to try something different and we hope to excite players and fans in the exhibition and be part of the first ever slam dunk exhibition on island," said Albert. (Mark Rabago)

16

From Page 20

ball Federation-sanctioned tournament.

Meanwhile, the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association is organizing the M-League Summer Season 2021, which is tentatively set to kick off early next month. The competition is open to Divisions A

and B and Masters. NMIFA is targeting eight teams for Division A and six for Division B with an 11 aside format for the two categories. Division A will be played in two 45-minute halves, while Division B will feature two 35-minute halves.

For the Masters, NMIFA is looking at four to six teams and format is 8 aside with games

to be played in two 25-minute halves. Minimum age requirement for the Masters is 45 years old, while Division B players are also allowed to compete in this category.

Interested teams have until June 25 to sign up for the summer season.

For more information, contact Jersh Angeles at 235-0173.

lead with a 6-2 win over Elliot before Kim and Lai San tied the head-to-head with a 7-5 tightrope in the men's doubles against Woo and Lee. Woo and Heras then shut the door on Team 3's upset hopes after outdueling Lai San and Elliot in the mixed doubles, 6-3.

Following a near collapse against Team 3, Team 5 went back to its dominating ways via another 5-0 wipe out of Team 4. Woo held Ken Song to love to win the opening men's singles. Lee then squared off against David Kwon and the two played the longest match of the tournament that had the latter taking a marathon 7-6 (11) win over the former. Heras kept Malika Miyawaki scoreless in the women's singles before Woo and Lee teamed up in turning back Song and Kwon, 6-4, in the men's doubles. Woo and Heras capped Team 5's successful run in the tourney with an impressive 6-0 win over

Song and Miyawaki.

For the record, aside from an unassailable 4-0 record in the tournament, Team 5 also finished with an 18-2 record in sets. Team 3 was runner-up with a 3-1 record (12-8 in sets), followed by Team 4 at 2-2 (9-11 in sets). Team 2 and Team 5 brought up the rear with win-loss records of 1-3 (7-13 in sets) and 0-4 (4-16 in sets), respectively.

NMITA president Jeff Race congratulated Team 5 for winning the round-robin competition and thanked all the players for taking part in the two-day tournament.

"It was a great event and the first of its kind for a local event here. Many thanks to TanHoldings and TSL Foundation for their sponsorship of the event," he said.

Results of the juniors division of the very first Marianas Invitational Team Cup will be published in tomorrow's edition of the *Saipan Tribune*.

MANCAO

From Page 20

was able to organize a track and field event again after two years of inactivity due to Super Typhoon Yutu and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"After two years of no open track and field meet, it just feels great to be back. We are planning for two more events this summer as a tune-up meet for our athletes and officials. Our main goal is using our sport, athletics, to create a healthier and fitter community," he said.

Sapong, who is also president of the Oceania Athletics Association, also thanked

Northern Marianas Sports Association, volunteers, and Public School System Athletic director Nick Gross for letting them borrow his office's public address system.

NMA president Ramon Tebuteb seconded Sapong's excitement in the return of the open track and field meet at the Oleai Sports Complex, adding that he's also overjoyed that a number of masters runners showed up and competed.

He said former NMA president Kurt Barnes was actually the lead person in NMA's masters programs and it's all but fitting that the federation decided to bring back the program at a time when the for-

mer longtime Saipan resident was on island for vacation.

"NMA via OAA always had access to this masters programs. This masters program is officially an OAA event. Fortunately, Mr. Nick Gross has graced NMA now to lead this. This is not the first time we have held this event. NMA has a wide range of on-and-off the track and field activities. These includes environmental stewardship, road races, women roles, etc.," he said.

Results of the other events of the Track and Field Open Meet—100m, javelin, shotput, and long jump—will be published in the next issues of the *Saipan Tribune*.



DeGrom dominates
after arm scares, Mets
and Braves split DH

PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune Sports

Shirley's Galvez:
Happy and proud
moment

PAGE 19



20 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 2021

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Woo-led Team 5 wins Marianas Invitational

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Team 5 led by captain Jimin Woo with players Sean Lee and Isabel Heras won the seniors division of the Marianas Invitational Team Cup last weekend at the American Memorial Park.

Mancao, Sato, Chavez, Cabrera top 1,600m



Mancao



Sato



Chavez



Cabrera

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Michael Mancao, Ko-suke Sato, Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez, and Tiana Cabrera won their respective divisions in the 1,600m race of Northern Marianas Athletics' Track and Field Open Meet held last Saturday at the Oleai track and field.



Mancao came in first in the open division after completing the four laps around the track in 5:41.8. Edward Dela Cruz came in second with a time of 5:48.3 with Orrin Pharmin completing the Top 3 in 6:23.2. Travannie Atalig (7:14.9), Darrel De Luna (7:22.6), and Simon Necesso

Chavez, for her part, was No. 1 in the 18-and-under age group, cutting the tape in 6:23, while Cabrera was first in the open division with a time of 6:32.2. Denise Myers finished second in the open division with a time of 6:39.

NMA secretary general Robin Sapong said he's just happy that the federation

See MANCAO on Page 19



It was the first time the organizing Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association ever held a team tournament and Team 5 made history by not only winning the championship, but did so by sweeping all its matches.

Woo and company first drew Team 1 and totally dominated them via a score of 5-0. Woo started things off with a 6-2 win over Colin Ramsey in the first men's singles. Lee then won with the same score against Isaac Heo in the second men's singles, before Heras made quick work of Serin Chung, 6-1, in the women's singles.

In the men's doubles, Woo and Lee teamed up in dispatching Ramsey and Heo, 6-2. Lee and Heras then completed the shutout with a 6-1 victory over Ramsey and Chung in the

See WOO-LED on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Isabel Heras, Jimin Woo, and Sean Lee of Team 5 pose with their championship medals after topping the seniors division of the Marianas Invitational Team Cup last weekend at the American Memorial Park.



16 named to M-League All-Star Selections

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Division A Golden Boot winner Mark Esalan will join 15 other players on the M-League All-Star Selections that will challenge the NMI Men's National Team's pool members in an exhibition game this Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Esalan, who led the M-League Spring 2021 in goals scored with 12, is among the four TanHoldings Football Club players who made the selection. The three others are Jason Quimzon, Brandon Tenorio, and Martin Jambor, who will also serve as the All-Star crew's coach. TanHoldings took the championship in Division A after finishing the double-round robin competition with an 11-1-2 win-draw-loss record.

Completing the M-League All-Star Selections are MP United FC's Andrew Schaffer, Allan Hinson, and Skyler

Poon, Paire FC's Ajani Burrell, Whit Altizer, Jeff Seo, and Eric Barajas, NMI Boys U18 National Team A's Jeremiah Diaz, U18 B's Jerald Aquino and Richard Steele, Kanoa's Andreuw Omelau, and The One's Xiong Zhe Li.



MP United's Norman Del Rosario is the team manager, while Eunsyu Hahn and Razeff Altamirano, also from MP United, NMI U18 B's Oliver Fajardo, and

TanHoldings' Abel Thomas are on the reserved list.

The M-League All-Star Selections will square off against the Blue Ayuyus, who are preparing for an East Asian Foot-

See 16 on Page 19



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
TanHoldings Football Club's Mark Esalan, left, leads the team's attack during their game against the NMI Boys U18 National Team B in Division A of the M-League Spring 2021 last month at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.